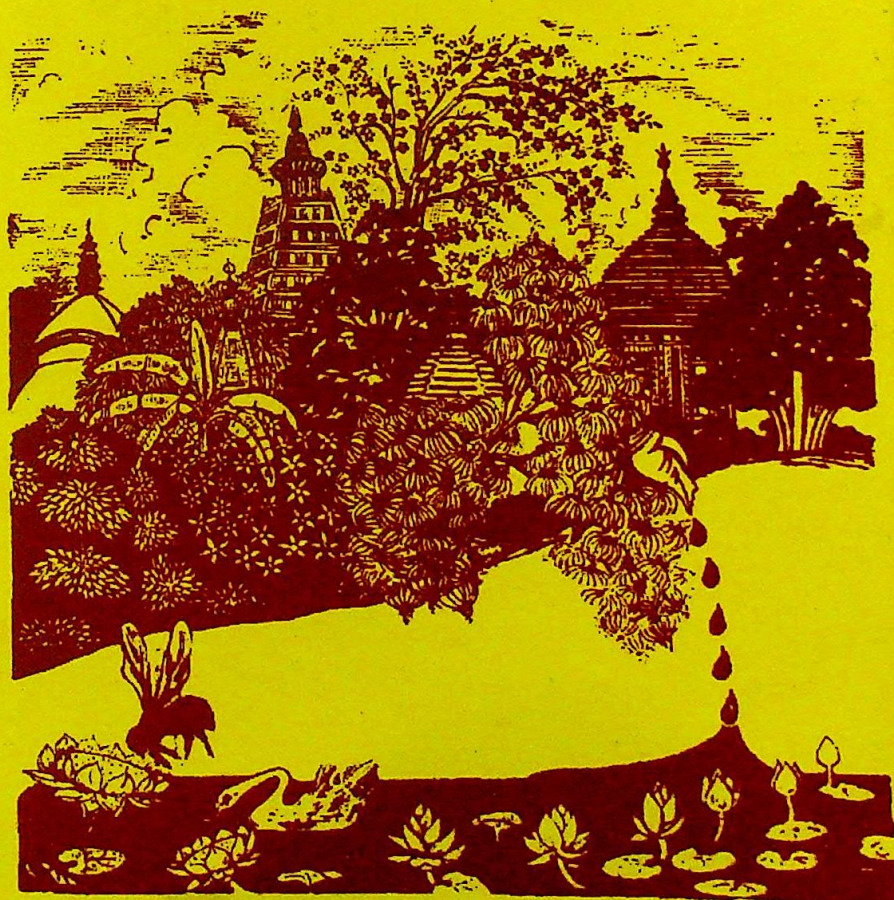




The True Nature and Function of the Living Entity

(“Jiber Swarūp & Swadharma”)

Srimad Kanupriya Goswami



*Ta Etadadhi Gachhanti Vishnor Yat Paramangpadam
Aham Mameti Dourjanyang Na jeshang Dehagehagam
(Shri Bhagabat 12/6/33)*

The inner meaning

Only those can get the most coveted feet of Vishnu i.e., stay at the shelter of the feet of God—whose chitta (which incidentally is above mind) has shien completely from one's mind the bad thoughts of "me" and "mine" from one's own and matters related to body—like house, property, children, etc. which really are not the self related (because only Soul is the real self) [So according to God and the scriptures he is a bad person whose thoughts are centred around "me" and "mine" in the material world]

THE TRUE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF THE LIVING ENTITY

(“Jīber Swarūp & Swadharma”)

SRIMAD KANUPRIYA GOSWAMI

(SRI NĀMA VIGYĀNĀCHĀRYA)

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NEW YORK U.S.A

FIRST EDITION, AUGUST, 2001

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PRICE : \$ 5.00

PUBLISHER

SRI GOUR RAI GOSWAMI

SRI SRI GOUR KISHORE SANTI KUNJA

PRACHIN MAYAPUR (SOUTH)

P.O. NABADWIP (NADIA) 741302 (W.B), INDIA

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25/5, GORAKSHABASI ROAD.

NAGER BAZAR, DUMDUM.

CALCUTTA—700028

AGENTS :

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PH NO (423) 652-1636

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SANDIEGO. CALIFORNIA-92129. U.S.A.

PATRONS :

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DR. AROBINDO GHOSH &

Dr. Amit Ghosh (F.R.C.S)

31, B.K.PAL AVENUE Kolkata-700 005

PH. No. 218-9541, 218-9179

PRINTED BY :

Mayapur Chandra Press

Vrihad Mridanga Bhavan

Mayapur, Nadia, WB.

Ph No. (95-3472 45-217/45-245), INDIA.

“Shri Harih”

Dedication

As under deep darkness the sleep indolent closed eyes open up at the touch of the first rays of the morning sun,

Similarly

one single ray of the light of whose unbounded mercy has revealed the brightest path of the Bhakti enamating from the Nama as the main stay (prop)

even before my eyes which are covered with darkness and depressed with ignorance whose feet are all to me

and who is my most worshippingable Shri Gurudeb and my father

who has gone to the feet of Shri Hari (Om Bishnupad) Shri Shrimat Surendra Nath Goswami

for the memorial services of his holy soul, this first offering is dedicated in the his name by an unworthy disciple and an incapable son.

“Agyāna Timirāndhyasyā Gnānānjana Salākayā Chakshurumilitang jena tasmai Shri Gurabe Namō”

Salutation to the Gurudeb who opens the eyes, blind by boundless ignorance, by stick (knife) of profound knowledge.

AUTHOR

Submissions

(Author's note on First Bengali Edition)

Shree Shree Gourrai Hari is my guardian and my God. It is His extreme good-wishes. "Jiver Swarup & Swadharma" (Bengali version) published. I could not understand whether this small book would bring any good to any body or whether at this time there is any utility of this book. My only submission about this book is that whether it embraces success or failure on one side it is the firm belief of my heart that I am not blessed with the minimum ability required for writing this small book and at the same time it is also my belief that like a puppet I have written this book as desired by omnipotent God—so it is really not done by me. If one gets any benifit from this book he may thank God for the same and for the deficiencies like mistakes etc. notice knowing that my inability and lack of knowledge are responsible the kind hearted readers may kindly rectify those mistakes.

I feel it is my duty to express my heartfelt gratitude to those great persons who due to God's desire, have favoured me at the time of writing and publication of this book. This book was published serially in the form of essays, in the famous magazine "Shyamsundar" This book is slightly amended but an enlarged version of the same.

At the time of publishing of this write up I have been encouraged in many ways by Shri Srila Prangopal Goswami—the famous Vaishnab Acharya—the founder of Shamsundar Magazine—without which I have great doubt if I could have proceeded to the extent required. Specially, in spite of my incapability, it is a great wealth to me to have his unrestricted love and liking. Secondly, Pujoyapad Vaishnab Acharya Pandit Shri Rashikmohan Vidyabhushan—who hails from directly the daughters lineage of revered throughout the world, Shri Shri Nibas Acharya Prabhu—I have got special favour from him. Even at his advanced age and being unwell the way he has read the book and kindhearted addition of his “preface” this has a great value to this book. I cannot repay the debt of his love to me. Thirdly, those who have encouraged me by their blessings and reviews being sympathetic to my small work; to those Vaishnab Acharyas devotees, great and good men,—I express my greatful thanks.

Author.

Fore-word

By the divine grace of Gourraiji, at last the English Version of "Jiber Swarūp-O-Swadharma", has come to light. Two thirsty souls from the western end of the globe, took the pain to translate the book, during their stay in Nabadwip about two decade ago. I owe to them in every respect.

Thereafter, inspite of every endeavour and the earnest request of the kind devotees the script could be published only recently for various odds.

I take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks and good wishes to Sri Sankarlal Ganguli, except whose help and labour, the publication was not possible. Sri Ganguli voluntarily gave his esteemed service in translating the remaing parts of the book, leaving the main text, beside making the press-copy ready and necessary proof reading. Actually he edited the book.

I, also, thankfully acknowledge the receipt of the financial helps extended to me from the "Bhaktiratna Smriti Pitha", Dr. Parth Majumder, Sri Kalidas Saha and from Roy brothers namely Prasanta and Kalyan; devoid of which the publication would ever remain a dream only. I invite "Kripa Ashirbad" (Spiritual blessings) for them from the devotees, the true lovers of the Supreme Lord Krishna, if they feel any way, sipritually benefited by reading the copy. Assistance of Srila Akhilatmanandasji of B.B.T. is also thankfully acknowledged.

Gour Purnima
25th, Falgun, 1407
Nabadwip

Bhakta-Kripa laba Parthi
Gour Rai Goswami
Publisher

PREFACE

When after a long spell of inertness, indifference and torpor (hypnotic sleep) a society begins to wake up, in most cases such awakening is reflected in its literature. During this time literature has to build itself through different concepts and notions. It has to undergo various conflicts, actions and reactions before burgeoning into a richer and prosperous life. At present we are witnessing a Renaissance in the Bengali Vaishnava literature. In spite of its many defects, it is a matter of hope and joy that now society is pulsating with increasing signs of life and joy, a new life is being established in society.

It is but natural that during this exuberance some deficiency or inadequacy will be visible.

It is a matter of greater happiness when we notice that the descendants of those who had illuminated the evening sky like stars surrounding shree Chaitanya, the Supreme and special arrival of god Himself, at the time of His birth and had emblossomed the society of the time, have awakened to a self-realisation, their sense of duty having been kindled. Their hallowed forefathers had

rejuvenated the spectre-like Society with the beauty and graces exuded from the nectar of love and devotion and transformed it into a glorious and beautiful garden fit for God's own past time and had regenerated new life and beauty into the lacklustre literature of the time, raising it to an unprecedented level of honour and reference there by attracting the attention of the world. their progeny have understood this and have embarked upon their familiar duties. Among these authors Shrimat Kanupriya Goswami's name deserves special mention. Before I dwell on this book written by Him I feel the need of introducing this author.

Even before the arrival of Shri Shri Krishna Chaitanya about five hundred years ago there were great souls in some villages of Bengal, who like jewels bedecked the mother earth—illuminating the hearts of people with the bright flames of their lamp of knowledge and very sharp intelligence and used to bathe and soothe hearts charred with three types of heat suffered in the world—by love and devotions like the current of Ganga and Yamuna and with the mild rays of smite of ideal characters used to influence with good education the hearts of the people—this author is a very able descendant and epitome of all virtues of those great souls.

Out of the companions appeared from the other world of Lord Shri Shri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu the Avatar who will enable us to

reach salvation from the clutches of Kali—the names that are mentioned with reverence are Shri Sadasahib Kaviraj, his son Shri Purusaothamdas and his son Shri Kanu Thakur or Thakur Kanai—these three are specially revered as Companions appeared from the other world by the Gaudiya Vaishnabas. Their identities are revealed in the vaishnaba Scriptures like Shri Chaitanya Charitāmrita and Shri Chaitanya Bhāgabat.

*“Shri Sadāshiv Kavirāj Boro Mahāsai
Shri Prushothamdas Tāhār Tanay
Ājanma Nimagna Nityānander Charane
Nirantar Balya Leela Kare Kṛṣṇa sone
Tār Putra Mahāsai Shri Kānu Thākur
Yār Dehe Rahe Kṛṣṇa Premāmritapur”*

(Shri Chaitanya Charitāmrita Canto Ādi 11
P.35-37)

Shri Sadāshib is a senior person, Shri Prusaothamdas is his son. From his birth he is attached to the feet of Nityānanda and takes part in the childhood gambols of Kṛṣṇa. His son is the great Shri Kānu Thākur—the love nectar of Kṛṣṇa flows in his veins.

In the last part (Uttarkhanda) called ‘Bhaktāmrita’ of Shri Laghu Bhāgabatāmrita it has been decided that among the Hari bhaktas (devotees) Prahlād, is the best, the Pāndavas excel Prahlād; From these Pāndavas some Yādavas are better—again amongst the Yādavas Uddhab is the best; the Braja gopis are the best of; as because

Shri Uddhab covets the dust of feet of Brajadevis. Again amongst these Brajarāmās Shri Rādhikā and Shri Chandrābali have been considered the best of all by Bhakti Scriptures—

*“Tatrapai Sarbathā Sresht Rādhā Chandrābali tyuve
Yuthyoshtu yoyoh Santi koti Sakhya Mrigidrishah.”*

Thus among the main Yothe swaris (having separate Kunjas and follwers for rendering services shri Rādhā and Chandrābali. They had millions of Gopis as their followers.

Between these two again Shri Rādhikā is the dearest to Kṛṣṇa and so Shri Rādhikā heads the list of all Bhaktas and is regarded as their crown.

We find Shri Sadāsiv Kavirāj in his previous leelā (birth) has been identified as Chandrābali—is the best of all counts.

*“Chandrābali Prāntulya kavirājah Sadasaibah
(Ananta Samhitā) Prantulya is the same person.*

‘Pura chandrābali Yasaib Braje Kṛṣṇa priyapara

Adhuna Gouradeshvashav Kavirāj Sadāsaivah (Shri Gour ganaddesah deepikā—156). In the past Chandrābali was among the closest of Kṛṣṇa in Braja and now in the Goura leelā She has turned into Kavirāj Sadāsaiba.

Shrila Purusaothamdās like his father Shri Sadāsaiva Kaviraj was a famous and respected person in the Vaishnaba World. In the Gourleelā he was a close follower of Shri Nityānanda and was among the famous twelve Gopālas who brought

the tide of Shri Nāma and Prema in Bengal. He has been mentioned as Stokakṛṣṇa in the Vaishnaba literature.

'Stokakṛṣṇa Sakhā Prag Yo dashah

Shri Purusaottamoh (Shri Gourganaddesh deepika—130)

Stokakṛṣṇa jenha Tenho Das Purusaottamoh (Bhaktamal)

Stokakṛṣṇa is das Purusaotham.

Shrila Debakinandan is a very famous composer of Vaishnab Vandanas—he was a disciple of Shri Purushotham Das Thakur and thus reached a stage of super holiness and enchantment and this has been stated by the author himself in his Vaishnab Vandanā. Like his father Shri purusaothamdas and grandfather Shri Sadāsaib Kavirāj, Shri Kanu Thākur was also honoured and respected in the Vaishnab World as God's companion from the other World. 'Sishu(child) Krishnadas' was his name in his Very childhood. In a very tender age his heart revealed unworldly Premmardhurya (necter of love). Amongst the Sakhās (friends) of Kṛṣṇa the highest place holders are 'Priya Narmashakhās' and amongst them again Subal and Ujjwal have been identified to be

From the handwritten copy of 'Shri Chaitanya Chandradaya written by Shrimad Vrindābandās Thākur the printed version was edited and published by late Kaviraj Surendra Nath Goswami in 429th year of the year of Chaitanya. Later Shri Sundarananda Vidyabinod published another edition of the same.

toppers—‘Priya Narmabashyesha Prabau Subaloj jwal’ (Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhuh) Shrimad Vrindābandās Thakur in his book ‘Shri Chaitanya Chandradaya’ has described him as Ujjwalsakha of Braja.

“Purushothamsuta Sishu Krisnadas Goswami Ujjwal Swarūp Anubhabe jani ami”

The son of Purushotham Child Krishnadas Goswami I know him as Ujjwal from my revelation.

He went to Shri Vrindaban with Srimati Jahnava devi in his teen age. During that visit seeing his unworldly beauty and the unique combination of his playing on the flute with an equally unique dancing style never seen before the then Brajabāsi Achāryas like Shripād Sriji Goswami enchanted and from that time he was called ‘Shri Kānu Thākur’. The author of Shri Chaitanya Bhāgabat Vrindābandas Thākur has waitten in his Chaitany Chandrādaya.

*“Kishor Bayas jakhan Takhan Vrindābane
Mahā Anubhab Tnār Dekhiāchi Nayane
Sankirtane Adwitiya Madan Gopal
Manihār Kanthe Dole Gale Banamāl
Muralir Rabe Sabār Harilen Chita*

[Due to Pakistani trouble the deities shifted to 1/2 Patbari Lane, Baranagar, Calcutta in the temple erected by Shrimat Gourhari Goswami,]

Brajabāsi Bale Kānāi Haila pratita
Srījib Goswāmi ādi Brajabāsigan
Dekhiā Tnāhār Rup Karilā Staban
Sei Haite Hailā nām 'Shri Kānu Thākur'
Ki Ar Kahiba Tnār Mahimā Prachur
Ai Ujjwal sakhār Kripā Kichhu jāre hai
Sahajei Saijan Rādhā Kṛṣṇa pai

At his mid teen age he had been to Vrindāban. I have observed his great realisation who has no second. In the Sankirtan he was as if Madan Gopāl Himself with jewelled necklace and flowing flower garland. He captured the hearts of all by the sound of his flute and Brajabāsis said that he made them remember about Kānāi (Kṛṣṇa). The Brajabasis headed by Shrijiba Goswami praised his beauty. From then he was named 'Shri Kānu Thākur'. I am unable to describe his many faceted sparkling character. The kripā of this Ujjwal Sakhā when showered on anybody he gets Rādhā Kṛṣṇa easily. It is said that during this dance some bells (nupur) fell from his leg and fell at Bodhkhānā village in the district of Jessore (now in Bānglādesh). For this reason he selected Bodhkhānā village as his place of residence. Here their deities Shri Shri Rādhā Prānballav is still

[According to some Vaishnava authors Srila Kangsari Sen—was Braja's Ratnābali Sakhi, —Sri Sadāśaiv Kavirāja's father. It could therefore be said that this family has Nityasiddhas (i.e. God's own persons) consecutively for four generations.]

present and in His Panchamadol (i.e. the fifth day from the Holi Festival) there is a joyful festival and on that day Kadamba flowers Blossom—is a matter of wonder.

Some of the Goswamis belonging to Thakur Kānai family shifted from Bodhkhānā to Bhājanghat village of the Nadia district of Bengal. In this village they have been worshipping the three deities of Radha Krishna established by them—"Shri Shri Rādhāballav, Shri Shri Rādhā Vrindābanchandra and Shri Shri Rādhā Gobinda. Srila Thākur Kānāi is the last of the person from the other world (Nityasiddha) who came to this family. That is why in the Vaishnab world they are known as 'Goswamis of Thākur Kānāi family.

The Vaidyas of Bengal are always famous for their intellect and genius.

They have always commanded respect in Society for their erudition intellect, conscience, sacrifice, knowledge, meditation, devotion and love (prema) and such spiritual qualities. Besides these sometimes these families were blessed with people who achieved religious salvation.—not only in the Vaishnaba Cults but also in Shaiba and Shakta Cults. We have heard of many Vaidyas renunciers in Bengal from ancient days till now who followed these cults and achieved their goals. Amongst the biographers of Shri Shri kṛṣṇa Chaitanya-Srila Murāri Gupta, Srīman Narahari

Thākur, Srīlā Kavi Karnapur, Srīla Lochan Dās, Shrīla Krīshnadās Kavirāj etc., Many greatmen by their birth in these families have glorified the Vaidyas.

The arrival of three consecutive generations from shri Sadāsaiv Kavirāj to Shri Thākur Kānāi the people from the other world—also brightened the glory of the Vaidyas. Just after Shri Kānu Thakur in this Vaishnaba family many holy and successful saintly persons were born. With their glory of erudition and the strength of bhakti they were adorned by the Society. In the later years also in this family amongst the religious and successfulls late Bihari lal Goswami author of 'KānuTatwa Nirṇay' and late Hārāadhan Goswami who was exceptionally experienced in the Bhaktishastras like Shri Bhagabad etc, -They deserve special mention near about half a century ago in the Eastern Bengal (Now in Bangladesh.)

The extract of Bhakti emanated from his lyrics created the waves of joy. I met him at Dacca. I was very young and he was in his old age. I was attracted by his poetic genius. I memorised many songs of his 'Swapna—Bilās', 'Bichitra—Bilās', 'Rāi Unmāadini' and 'Bharat Milan'. Even today I remember those songs. I have witnessed in his

The famous extremely respected late Krishna Kamal Goswami was born in this holy family at Bhājānghāt.)—

personal habits, behaviours, courtesy and humility. The steadfastness of Bhakti and following good behaviour code by the Vaishnabas of old age. The worshipping sagelike father of the author of this book Late Kavirāj Surendra Nāth Goswāmi, B, A L. M. S was extremely liked by me. He had passed away to the other World. From the moment we met there was a very close relationship. He was far junior to me in age. But his patience, gravity, sweetness, keenness in learning, sacrifices, pursuing the truth, reticence simplicity and above all in his vaishnabiteness always carried my respect for him. I loved him—and had an affection but that affection was not like the one to a junior; that was an affection mixed with very profound respect. In my heart of hearts with the feeling of respect my affection flowed. After he went to the other World, for a long time I suffered from the burns of extreme loss. The Author of this book Shriman Kanupriya Goswāmi is known to me from his boyhood. His steadfastness to truth, pious character keenness to religion, intellect for balancing considerations—all are manifested in his boyhood and I was watching him but could not at that time imagine that he in the meantime would be so much revered and respected and would so much excel in the Vaishnaba religious literatures to be successful in increasing the honour of his own family which is already respected by the World. At

the emergence of his youth the good qualities like control over his desires, self-control, following Brahmacharya and not getting married, renunciation of worldly desires were specially noticed. In the smallest seed of the peepul tree, the possibility of a great big tree is hidden and in days and years to come as per the rules of expansion and growth it grows and spreads, similarly I noticed the development of many faceted qualities of his character; but that the genes of his great family would develop so much in him I could not even imagine then. He was not educated in any English or Sanskrit School and college but with the help of acquired genius from his previous birth and also with the help of God's grace the extent of development in his erudition and intellect and knowledge and Bhakti (love) cannot be observed in many well educated people. This is rare. The flow of his speech is like unrestricted flow of Ganga & Jamuna but still faultless in choice of words and clarity of thoughts. In his speech there was no iota of irrelevance inconsistency, diversion from main points, unpleasant diction and use of unnecessary words. Much after the speech has been delivered, in the ears of well educated audience, sweet resonance of thoughtful speech remains. Now I am saying about his good writing style. This book is the burning example of the same. People may think that it is very easy to

compose essays on Vaishnaba religious scriptures but in fact this is far from so and quite opposite. The Sripad Goswamis living in Vrindāvan [Nityaparshadas (God's own persons from the other World)] with the grace of Shree Shree Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu—the scriptures authored by them there are huge storage of unfallible decisions and of very deep and sharp understanding and dissection; but without God's grace there is no entry in that store [With our learning and intellect acquired by our labour.] The book containing Bhaktisiddhantas (percolated unfallible decisions) composed by sheer intellect—they may be pleasing to read by their writing style word selection skill and sweetness of their language but reading these books written by those who do not follow the path or Bhakti (love)—God's ardent followers on the path of love do not get any satisfaction by reading these books. In this book however very difficult philosophic thoughts have been discussed, having understood the inner sense resting in very deep mysticism and explaining them in easy and simple language making it easily readable. His language is lucid yet very well dictioned; each word is the result of thoughtfulness but the writing style is such that even the little-educated women would easily grasp the meaning. These essays are full of philosophic thoughts but they have been dear to

the readers with the poetic beauty, sweetness and the exquisite language. Another speciality of this book is that whenever the author has touched on any subject his originality of thoughts and novelty of views have been reflected very clearly. Such originality and novelty of thoughts are very rare. Even the subtle factual theories have been easily comprehensible to the common people by his novel and ingenuous method of delineation. The example and similes etc. together with the beauty of the very sweet and flowing language have enabled him to attract the readers to these essays.

At times repetition of subject becomes necessary. To some readers this may appear to be improper. But when a matter of deep and subtle thought has to be presented to a general reader to make him able to understand, the subject has to be reflected on the simple mind in various ways by various methods with many ideas and examples. And that is why this method of writing becomes an ornament instead of a defect. so the critics must express themselves taking into view all these aspects. As the size and shape of human body is under the control of rules of individuality it is only very natural that the selection, reasoning and channel of thoughts and methods of judgement will also bear the stamp of individuality. Now I am speaking of my own reasoning. To my mind amongst the books published in Vaishnaba litera-

ture at present times, this book will be placed very high. It has purity of language, chastity of thoughts, lofty ideals lucid and skilful explanation, bedecked with examples and similes and full of siddhantas (unfallible findings) in accordance with Vaishnaba scriptures. Throughout the book the cadences of the language, the gracefulness of devotion and the skilful exposition and interpretation of siddhantas are brilliantly belineated. My prayer to the hallowed feet of His Kindness Sri Sri Gourangasundar is that may this author, by His Grace, have a sound and healthybody long life, mental peace and remain an epitome of a devoted soul in human society. May he, having been soaked in the moonbeams emanating from His holy feet, dwell eternally in the kingdom of joy and happiness and forever immense the human society which is inflicted by worldly passions, into the ambrosia of love and devotion with his exposition and interpretation of the Bhakti Scriptures. Nothing more.

B.year 1340 (1933 A.D)
12th Agrahayan,
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Sri Rashik Mohan Sharma

(Vidyabhusan)

25, Bagbazar Street,
calcutta-3

INTRODUCTION

The True Nature and Function of the Living Entity

Within the living entity—within the hearts of men, dissatisfaction born of material desires is the main source of agitation. True self-satisfaction comes of mental tranquility and such mental tranquility is found in “Bhagavad-Bhakti” or loving devotion to the Supreme Lord. In society, the level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction is determined by the amount of faith and devotion there is for God. One can easily understand this point by thinking it over carefully. The fire of violence, hate, war, etc., is set burning by the friction of the countless uncontrollable desires of the living entities, who are also known as “jīvas”. This fire can only be put out by the waters of faith and devotion, or “Bhakti”. Then the heart of the living entity, or “*Jīva*” becomes pure and free from desire due to the appearance of pure “Bhakti” then he becomes eligible to enjoy real peace. The presence or non-presence of “Bhakti” is the determining factor in the maintenance of peace in human society.

No one becomes unhappy for the sake of being so. We become unhappy in the course of trying to find happiness. As long as one does not attain to real

happiness he is left with no other choice than to be unhappy. At the present time, there is an extreme state of anxiety in the world which has never been seen before. The reason for this is the search for peace by everyone. But what is real peace ? What is the thing lacking in everyone that is the cause for worldwide anxiety, and by what means can this dissatisfaction and anxiety be mitigated and true peacefulness be restored ? Without knowing this there is absolutely no way of restoring world peace. If we give careful thought to the following statements, the present worldwide strife, its source and its solution can be determined.

What is the thing most desired by everyone? The answer most people will give is "peace and happiness." No one will admit that other than this there is anything else wanted in the world today. At the present time we are faced with extreme fear due to the possibility of things heretofore unheard of such as atomic war, etc. Untruth, lack of morality and trust, violence and war, a vapor of hate has spread poisonously all over the world. The hearts of all men and women everywhere are laden with extreme anxiety and worry. From the palatial buildings of the heads of government to the grass huts of the poor villagers, both the rich and the poor are today burning with an unnatural mental anguish. I think it can be safely said that this kind of widespread trouble has never been seen before.

The troubled condition of the present-day world is not something unknown to anyone. In analyzing the all-pervading and unnatural inauspiciousness and lack of peace, some thinkers say it is due to some social discrepancies, others say the discrepancies are in education, or in the government, or in the economy—many persons thus express many different ideas about the root causes of this world-wide unrest. Although there is disagreement about the area in which the discrepancies lie—everyone agrees that at the root of the world's trouble there is some sort of major imbalance.

The modern-day communists' view, briefly expressed, is this: The world's wealth and consequently the luxuries and facilities for the enjoyment of life are concentrated in the hands of a mere handful of capitalists and their wealth exceeds their actual needs. As a result, on the other hand, the vast majority of the population is deprived of that wealth and is forced to remain in want of the basic necessities of life. In one portion of the social body there is an excess of wealth and riches, happiness and material enjoyments, and in the other portion there is scarcity, or the lack of such riches and pleasures. This is the discrepancy which the communists have determined as the root cause of the world's unrest and uncertainty.

In their opinion, the solution to the problem in essence is this, that if everyone in society can enjoy the same facilities of wealth, health and freedom and can remain equal in all respects—if all differences of higher and lower, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, healthy and unhealthy, big and small, good and bad, even religion and irreligion, can be destroyed, then the discrepancies will be removed and the world will enjoy once again peace and happiness equally, everywhere.

The possession of the right to a greater enjoyment of material benefits on the one hand and the lack of such a right on the other is the only cause of all calamities and disorder, unrest and uncertainty. The philosophy which stands in opposition to this social imbalance is modern-day communism.

This communism, although apparently pleasing to the ear or enthusing and hope-giving to the poor and less fortunate, is nevertheless born of a grossly superficial understanding of the world situation. Lacking in consideration of certain subtleties, it is more likely to create greater disturbances than it is to achieve its desired goals.

The lack of depth of this philosophy can be understood by a clear headed assessment of the following considerations:

- i) If the imbalance of material facilities in different

portions of society is the actual cause of world-wide-spread disharmony, then just as there is dissatisfaction where there is want, one should expect to find proportionately greater amounts of satisfaction wherever there are greater amounts of wealth and enjoyments—but is this actually the case? Never. In today's world, everyone, be they high-class or low-class, rich or poor, all are experiencing anxiety. It can even be said that those who are in great need, after working hard all day are at least able to enjoy a full night's rest due to their physical and mental fatigue—whereas those who are in possession of vast riches are often seen to suffer from insomnia due to their illegal accumulation of such riches by black marketing, etc. So much so that the rush of suicides amongst fabulously wealthy millionaires increases day by day. The possession of wealth in excess of need cannot possibly be the cause of happiness for any individual, and what is more, it is even seen to be the cause of greater unrest. Therefore for someone to suggest that wealth, if divided equally amongst many persons for their enjoyment, will be the cause of happiness and peace, it must be said that his proposal is extremely illogical. Can foodstuffs which are unable to satisfy one man's hunger possibly satisfy the hunger of many men if divided amongst them? And that hungerstricken man who gets a portion of those foodstuffs—even though it may momentarily seem to be an increase over his previous allotment—will

shortly consider that increased portion to be deficient and therefore will become a cause of dissatisfaction as much as was his previous insufficiency' that is sure.

2) If the world's wealth should be distributed evenly amongst everyone, temporary peace may be created, but even so, just as there is uneven distribution in the present situation, is it not possible that for the very same reasons the very same inequality will again appear— some persons becoming better situated and others again becoming needy ? If that should happen, the social discrepancies should appear again and again, then how is it possible that world peace could be kept intact ? In the great communist nations of today, are the country's leaders and the worker-farmer community actually equal in terms of power and prestiges etc. ?

3) Even if we accept that even distribution of wealth is possible, still the three qualities of nature, namely goodness, passion and ignorance make for natural discrepancies which would make it impossible for the different pleasures of life to be distributed in an equal way amongst men. Due to the existence of differences in the qualities of material nature, the universe has taken on its variegated appearance. When these qualities become perfectly balanced then there is apocalypse or the non-manifestation of the universe. He who creates the universe is also the only authority in the matter of its maintenance and destruction.

That is not within the range of the capabilities of man. Therefore, even if we accept that equal distribution of wealth is possible, still due to the nature of the universe itself, it shouldn't be hard to understand that equal distribution of enjoyments or happiness would be a complete impossibility.

All cows do not give the same quantity or quality of milk. all trees do not bear the same fruits and flowers, all fields do not produce the same in crops, all horses cannot run at the same speed, all of one's sons and daughters are not possessed of the same beauty and intelligence, not all wives are equal in form and qualities and all husbands are not equally qualified or expert. Just as there are so many discrepancies in every single aspect of existence—so much so that no two faces or even two particles of dust are exactly the same, In such a universe the effort to equally distribute the pleasures of life is certainly laughable—anyone who considers this carefully will easily understand.

4) Should anyone say that the best things in life should be communally preserved and protected and then equally distributed for enjoyment and that thus peace and equality are assured—that is also illogical because that which one person thinks is the best thing, others will think to be useless and quite dispensable. That which is logically reasonable to one person is equally illogical and unreasonable to an-

other. Therefore, in the matter of the construction of a house, the selecting and arranging of furnishings, dress and cosmetics, eating and entertainment, etc., there are gulfs of difference amongst different people. Therefore, the question arises, who will determine which things are best ?

In such a case it must be accepted that the universe must survive inspite of the great variety of disparities extant in it. Therefore, until the time of universal dissolution, it will be necessary for it to remain with all its discrepancies of size, big or small, goodness and evil, wealth and poverty, knowledge and ignorance, obesity and emaciation, health and disease, beauty and ugliness, happiness and distress etc. The only time when complete equality will be possible is at the time of the annihilation. Therefore, if bringing peace to the world is dependent on ridding it of its external disparities, then that peace is either a complete impossibility or else it will only take place at the time of universal dissolution.

Now if we take the opportunity to judge unbiasedly what the main causes of the present restless condition of the world and what is the best remedy for that situation, then we will easily be able to understand that the conception of the communists, which is based on gross materialism, has a great error at its very foundation. That error is to think that peace and sensual pleasures are synonymous terms. By the force

of time, the conception of the soul as distinct from the body is becoming lost, and as the that mistaken identification of the self takes place, the ability to distinguish sense pleasure from actual spiritual peace becomes covered—so that now sense happiness is taken to be real peace. Therefore the idea of the modern day communists is that by equal distribution of sensual pleasures it will be possible to establish peace in the anxiety ridden world, but in actual fact this is an entirely erroneous conception—and in order to show that, we will first give a general idea of the superior type of communism developed by the sages of ancient India, who were knowers of the past, present and future:

1) A man is to be understood as human body equipped with a certain brain capacity and senses; and along with it, a soul. Therefore, the human body and senses and its soul can be seen as distinct entities. For this reason, their needs are also distinct. The “bodyman” is dull matter; therefore, for it there is a necessity for the fulfilment of certain sensual needs; whereas the “soul-man” is spiritual in substance (*cid-vastu*) and therefore it needs contact of transcendental objects by which it will experience peace. Momentary gratification of the “body-man’s” senses is known as “sense-happiness” and the “soul-man’s” pleasure or satisfaction is known as “peace”. So we can conclude that “peace” and

“happiness” are two entirely different things. In the language of the Upanishads, they are known respectively as Sreya and Preya. (Katha. Upanishad 12, 1-2)

2) Because the soul is understood to be superior to the body and sense, the needs of the body-man for sense gratification are inferior to the need of the soul-man for peace. Therefore we hear the common saying that “well being (peace) is better than happiness” (Sukher cheye swasti bhalo) If the two were identical then they would not be commonly distinguished in this way.

3) The transcendental object which is the need of the soul is religion. This means that religion is the only means for attaining peace. Religion is the only thing which is capable of giving satisfaction to the “soul-man.” For the main fact, the main element of religion is to awaken the understanding of the soul as being something distinct from the body. The chief goal of religion is to illuminate the human society with the knowledge that there is a soul distinct from matter, whose satisfaction will lead to peace within the entire social body.

4) From the self-realization of the “soul-man” comes the comprehension of a Supreme Soul or God, and gradually beilef, faith and devotion toward Him are manifested. Naturally accompanying these is the belief in piety and sin as the cause of heavenly or hellish existence. and the experience of worldly

happiness and distress. As a result of such belief, men are able to give up lying and dishonesty and take up the "straight and narrow path". In the event that such superior religiosity brings peace and satisfaction to the "soul-man", then that supremely satisfied society determines that for the sake of spiritual achievements renunciation of sensual life is more profitable than enjoying great width and luxuries. If that be the case, then to forcefully take the wealth of the capitalists by some legal measures and distribute it amongst the poor becomes an unnecessary measure. The rich voluntarily become eager to selflessly distribute their wealth and what is more, the poor, who are satisfied with spiritual riches are not so enthusiastic to accept it. In such a situation, even though externally there may remain the existence of disparities, social and economic, still that cannot disturb society's peaceful atmosphere. In this way, only by superior religious development and satisfaction of the soul by self-realization can there be undisturbed peace in the human society. That is why religion is known as the "maintainer of the Faith". It is actually impossible for the universe to exist without religion

5) When the "soul-man" is unable to find satisfaction or peace through religious life or spiritual cultivation, then from that unsatisfied, unpeaceful soul, the feeling of incompleteness begins to smoulder. That smouldering feeling due to being covered

by the ignorance of bodily identification appears externally in the form of dissatisfaction in the body and senses. As a result, there arises the unavoidable clash of interests in human society in competition for the attainment of sensual pleasures. The inevitable results are hate, violence, deception, disorder, arguments, cheating and finally, war. In these forms, the smouldering dissatisfaction of the soul appears in the external world like a blazing fire.

6) The essence of all truth, the most perfect religion of the living entity is faith, devotion and love for the Supreme Lord. This topmost conception of spiritual life is the ultimate means for the "soul-man" to achieve peace and satisfaction. Devotion to God is the food of the soul, love for Him is the soul's drink, and faith in Him is his very breath of life. If the soul-man can attain such spiritual riches" and thus become some what satisfied in that way then, even if material necessities or sensual pleasures are in short supply, there will be no extra-ordinary disturbances in the external world. The actual disparity, due to which peace is currently impossible in the world, is that even when material comforts and enjoyments are obtained in great quantity, the soul-man is deprived of the aforementioned spiritual necessities of life.

7) By pouring water on a fire it can certainly be extinguished— otherwise, by pouring ghee or oil or

some other fuel on it, it will blaze even more furiously. Similarly, if the fire of sensual life, which is the fountainhead of all worldly misery, is to be extinguished, then the water of devotion to God is the only infallible means. Increasing sense pleasures is like increasing fuel on the fire and the inevitable result is that an unnatural increase of disturbance and unrest takes place.

8) As much as the "soul-man" is deprived of his spiritual, transcendental legacy and alternatively the "body-man" is provided with his desired sense objects, so much is the soul beset by feelings of deficiency as the unavoidable result of this disparate arrangement, and proportionately again to that is the appearance of troubles and lack of tranquility in the external world—that is certain.

9) Because the soul is superior to the body' the needs of the body or "happiness" is not as important as the soul's need for peace, which thus should, in all respects, be given priority in human society. If that should not be possible then at least the two needs should be strived for equally, which would mean that there would be no extraordinary disquiet in the social body. But if no equal endeavour is made in these two matters and special emphasis is given to the effort for bodily happiness then a proportionate increase in the causes for unrest is seen in the world. When the inner-self is completely drenched in transcenden-

tal felicity, then there is not the slightest need for bodily or mental things.

10) Therefore, the modern communists' conception of the cause for disorder and chaos in the world as being due to the disparity in distribution of material enjoyments and facilities cannot be considered" as logically acceptable.

In actual fact, the disparity by whose poisonous fruits the world has today lost its legacy of peace, is not the disparity of distribution of wealth in the outer world. It is an internal disparity, that is to say the deprivation of the soul-man from that which is his birthright, namely spiritual life, even to the point of making him forgetful of its existence and the increased effort to fulfil the needs of the "bodyman" in the form of sense happiness and bodily comforts. This great mistake is not simply at the basis of the communist philosophy, but it is also at the root of all materialistic education and culture. Therefore, all efforts at establishing some universal peace are having the opposite results and one witnesses the resultant day by-day increase of disquiet in the modern world.

If this is actually the case, then by looking clearly and cool-headedly, we will easily be able to see the following facts.

The material facilities and opportunities for enjoyment in the present day have increased inconceivably over those of previous ages, in the place

of the ox-cart is the aeroplane, electric lighting has replaced the oil lamp, the carrying of messages formerly done on horseback is now done by wireless, the electric fan has replaced the fan made from palm branches. Modern material science has fulfilled the "body-man's" needs in so many new and advanced ways, but even with such an increase of material facilities, why is the world tortured by ever increasing disquiet? In previous times, when man had a great store of spiritual wealth, then even in the midst of a hundred shortages, he had great satisfaction—the "soul-man" was drenched in the peaceful waters of devotion. In the modern world, even in the midst of abundant facilities for material sense happiness, there is a great absence of spiritual satisfaction. The soul has been deprived of his birthright. Therefore, this disparity in the emphasis on the satisfaction of material and spiritual needs has filled the world with the poisonous vapours of unrest as its unavoidable result.

At the present time in this body-conscious world, the glittering light of materialistic education and culture has robbed man of his internal spiritual vision and thus great enthusiasm and desire for sense gratification has been enkindled, much more than the understanding of the need for spiritual life and the endeavour for it. Thus today, the existence of individual and Supreme Souls—the eternal living en-

tity, the Jiva, and God, have almost become as myths, and piety and sin, heaven and hell, Fate and Destiny are all being looked upon as objects of derision. Those persons who have made this temporary world and the material body their all-in-all deride the spiritual reality on the one hand, and on the other they glorify materialism and materialistic expertise. Even though now-a-days, human society has become bewildered by materialistic philosophy and the spell of modern scientific achievements and thus tries to write off metaphysical facts such as fate, destiny or the unseen result of one's own work (Karma-phala) as being simply due to the lack of training or the results of misguided ignorance, still every day, in the course of events, so many unexpected things happen and in that way the victory of fate or destiny is proclaimed. Are the leaders of society not perplexed at this? Fate or Destiny refers to the occurrence of inconceivably unexpected events which bear no relation to man's wishes or wants. To call belief in such Destiny as the result of ignorance or bad training is a very brazen move and can itself be called a "trick of Fate".

Therefore, today it is seen that which is of utmost importance to the soul, the eternal truth of spiritual existence is denied and criticized and on the other hand, the "body-man's" necessities, which are temporary and therefore untrue, impermanent in their existence and only superficial, are given high respect.

This disparity has been created in society and has been given the name progress even though it is actually regressive and a rapid motion on the path to infamy. We conclude that should this rapid movement not be checked immediately, the destruction of the world is inevitable. Absorbed in singing the glories of materialism and science, the whole world is neglecting, snubbing and slighting transcendentalism. As the punishment for this great offence, the destruction of this Godless Society by the lightning bolt of material science's own discoveries is not long in coming.

If at this crucial time we are unable to come to our senses and regain our spiritual consciousness, and are thus able to bring respect for spiritual life to an equal footing as that given to materialism, then we should start programmes for teaching that the soul is more important than the body. For broadcasting such truths, all modern facilities can be used. Should this be done then very shortly the poisonous vapours of destructive materialism can be removed, the danger of world annihilation can be averted and once again the world can enjoy the refreshing atmosphere of peace and harmony. We pray at the feet of the Almighty, that by His mercy, the world may soon develop such intelligence.

The original and basic religion of the world, the eternal religion of the Vedic scriptures also

considered a type of communism for the welfare of the world. That communism or philosophy of equality has been described briefly.

In practically all of the world's religions there is a similarity in the basic conception. By whatever name it may be called, that conception is that there is an existence of the soul beyond the body and that one should have faith and devotion for the Supreme Soul or Almighty Being. If, instead of focusing on the superficial differences of ritualistic practices, emphasis is given to the oneness in the basic conception of all religions, in other words, if man is better able to understand religion's underlying purpose, then the greater emphasis on the bodily conception of life will somewhat decrease and a feeling of unity of all living beings as being dependent on a common God, then the desired concord amongst men will easily become a possibility.

By the influence of ignorance, the living entity forgets his spiritual identity. Simultaneously, he forgets the Supreme Lord, or becomes antipathetic towards Him. This results in his losing all conception of what he is and what his activities should be and he develops a contrary intelligence. In order to awaken consciousness in human society that forgetfulness of one's spiritual identity is the actual cause of unrest and disturbance, it is the most important duty of every man to consider and judge,

“Who am I?”, ..Why is that even though I am suffering constantly the pains of material life, I insist on running down its desert-like path? What is the real cause of my suffering?”, “By what means can I end all my miseries and attain the highest peace?”, “Are peace and happiness the same thing or are they different?”, “What is the means by which I can attain that spiritual ecstasy for which I have always yearned?” As long as these questions remain unanswered, there is no possibility of finding the path to peace and tranquility.

Furthermore, the answer to all these questions cannot be found by mere mental speculation. Because men are different in temperament and psychology and therefore their intelligence and ability to judge are different, material logic and reason have no solid foundation. For this reason, in practically all countries, in practically all races, scripture or revealed knowledge has been accepted as the best evidence in transcendental subjects. Therefore we have tried to answer the above-listed questions, as best we can understand, according to the most ancient and fundamental of spiritual literatures—the Vedas.

For an inexperienced and incapable person like myself to attempt to present a solution for the difficult problems of life is certainly a foolhardy endeavour, yet the all-merciful Lord, Who is especially kind to

the meek and Who is capable of giving potency to the lame to climb mountains and to the dumb to recite the Vedic scriptures, Who can by the merest hint of His desire make any impossibility possible, that Lord is giving me the inner impetus to undertake this task. Feeling this, believing it, and therefore putting hope in it, being thus inspired, it has been possible for me to take up such a grave responsibility. If the world's community of wise and holy persons judge that this book [*See below] has any value whatsoever in helping this world attain to spiritual peace, or even if just one tormented soul develops faith in devotional service to the Lord and by that attains true divine felicity, then I will consider this labour to have been successful, and for that, I again and again offer my thanks and obeisances to the glorious lotus feet of the Supreme Lord.

With all humility,

The Author

Calcutta

The Appearance Day of

Gouranga Mahāprabhu

C. A. 471 (A. D. 1957)

*The True Nature and Function of the Living Entity.



SRI SRI GOURRAIJI

take on a superficial appearance of many varieties, fundamentally it and its goals flow in only one direction. Whether is be *jihāsā*, the desire to avoid distress and those things which cause it, or *abhiṣā*, the desire to find happiness and those things which are its causes, all activities have the nature of acceptance and rejection. The purposes of every action are rejection or the termination of afflictions and acceptance or the attainment of happiness. Therefore the prime necessity felt by every living being is the termination of his sufferings and the attainment of some kind of beatitude. This necessity can also be called "the urge of the soul of self."

No one does any work out of the needs of another. Even though superficially it may appear that some work is being done for another's sake, still in actual fact that activity is also, in the final analysis, self-directed. In the functional world all those activities which are labelled as altruistic are ultimately self-centred. One engages in activities on behalf of others only to the extent that he sees the other's welfare to be of personal benefit. Therefore we will be able to understand that so-called altruism in another from of egocentricity.

The natural or innate tendency of every living being is that "I will be happy" and, "May I be free from distresses." Everyone desires happiness or ecstasy from the tiniest one-celled creature upto the highest of the demigods, Brahma. Despite our defferences

of nature, in whatever way we may desire for it, we all have the desire that "I will be happy" and we all make a full effort to attain such happiness. But, "Who am I?" "What is my true identity?"—for the most part we are unable to answer these questions. Not knowing what his actual form, identity is or how can anyone possibly be able to grasp what is "my need" or "my nature"?

Ordinarily we have taken our bodies to be the "I". The typical *jīva* takes the material substances of the body and senses to be the self. Therefore if a person's body is fat or thin we generally hear him make statements such as "I am fat" or "I am thin". If his eyes should be blind or his ears deaf, then he says, "I am blind" or "I am deaf" all these type of statements reveal that the speaker identifies his body as the self. If it should be true that the material body and senses are the "I", then the satisfaction of that body and senses should result in the enjoyment of the complete happiness that we have always yearned for, of that there is no doubt. On the other hand, if it should be false and the "I" be something beyond the gross body and thus if there should be an error at the very root of our understanding of what that "I" actually is, then for unlimited lifetimes, birth after birth, one may go on absorbing himself in arranging for the gratification of one's body and senses without ever being able to bring about even the least amount of satisfaction for that "I" element. Undoubtedly this statment will be acceptable to all.

A person possessed by ghosts remains both hungry and emaciated even though he constantly may be eating the most nourishing of foodstuffs, although the desire to eat, the act of eating and the foodstuffs themselves are all being engaged to fulfil his personal needs, there are forcefully redirected and are displayed for the satisfaction and nourishment of the ghostly parasite. Similarly, at the very root of our understanding of what the self is we make an error, then there should be no reason whatsoever to doubt that all our efforts at self-satisfaction will always be redirected to fulfil the needs of others.

The "I" is known as the ātmā or soul. The individual ātmā can also be called the jīva or *jīvātmā*. The "I" and the soul are one and the same. Can the body be the ātmā? Or is the atma beyond the body; something entirely independent of it? To understand the answers to these questions is called "self-realization". All the Vedic scriptures and the literatures which follow the Vedic conclusions are based solidly on the firm foundation of self-knowledge. Seeking for knowledge of the self is the root of the religious quest. Just as one cannot learn a language thoroughly without knowledge of the alphabet, similarly no one's activities, either material or spiritual can be utilized for actual satisfaction of the self until he knows what his real identity is. Who am I? Without knowing the answer to this question, whatever arrangements are

made for the satisfaction of my inner demands will all be rendered useless. From the beginning to the end, everything will simply be erroneous, i.e. all activities meant for personal gratification will almost definitely be used for someone else's satisfaction. In the process of solving a mathematical problem, if a mistake is made at the very beginning of the process, even if all the rest of the calculations are made without error, still the final result will be wrong. So too, right at the beginning of solving the problem of life, if one starts by making a mistake in understanding what his self-identity is, then everything afterwards will also be transformed into a colossal error.

Simply due to this one error at the beginning, there is no measure as to how many suffering jīvas have had to shed tears while standing on the shores of the river of futility while trying to balance the equation of life. And as long as they don't correct that one basic error they will have to come back, again and again, to that point of frustration. Without first determining "Who am I" it is impossible to know "What do I need?" or "What should I do?" The first thing to know in the religious quest is what is the true nature and function of the living being or jīva. Thus, the reverend Sanatan Goswami, even though himself the greatest of the self-realized, out of a desire to have the process of religious understanding shown to the ignorant living beings, feigned ignorance and asked the Lord the following questions : "ke āmi?

keno āmāy jāre tāpo-troy? ihā nāhi jāni āmi kemone hit hoy.”—“Who am I? Why do the manifold miseries of life cause me to suffer always? Not knowing these things, how is there any possibility of my welfare?” (CC Madhya 20-96) “sādhya-sādhono tattwa puchite nāhi jāni, kripā kori sob tattwa kohoto āpani.”—“I don’t know the process of inquiry into the process for knowing the goal of life, you please be merciful and of your own accord reveal everything to me.” (CC M 20-97) “Who am I?” If one wants to know the nature of the soul completely then the question of his relationship with the supreme arises automatically. This is called *sambandha-jñāna* or the knowledge of relationships. Without this knowledge of relationship or self identification how can one possibly know what is the ultimate goal of life or *prayojan*? And without knowing the goal of life how is it possible to go about achieving it? Therefore Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī progressively inquired from the Lord with all humility as to the nature of *sambandha* (the identity of the living being and his relationship with the Supreme Lord and nature etc.), *prayojan* (the ultimate goal of life) and *abhidheya* (the process for achieving that goal).

Who, in actual fact, am I? That we don’t know. If the body and senses, which we ordinarily take to be the self were actually so, then we wouldn’t say one moment, “I am thin” or “I am fat” and “I am blind” or “I am deaf” and then, the very next moment, say

"My hand, my foot, my body, my eyes" and in this way distinguish the self from the body and senses.

The soul and things relating to the soul are distinguishable items. My wealth, crops, clothes and ornaments are not "I" but mine" or things related to me. In the same way, we say "my body, my senses" meaning that they are things separate and distinguishable from the self. From this we can get an appropriate idea of the soul as being and entirely separate element or item.

Since time immemorial we living beings are being tormented by ignorance. To fulfill the needs of the false "I" we have wasted countless priceless lives. Ignorance has played no joke greater than this on the living being. If anyone wants to free himself from this great deception of *Māyā* (illusion personified) then first he has to search out behind the refuse piles of the material body and senses and find out where, in what nook or cranny the real "I" is hiding himself. In some unknown recess, behind the impenetrable stone fortifications built up by *Māyā* the constant pitiable lament of the *jīvātmā* can be heard all night and day. His voice is so muffled and unclear that at first it is not very easy to distinguish him from his surroundings in the least. When the day's cacophony dies out, in the deepening stillness of night, the plaintive song of the mountain waterfall can be heard progressively more and more clearly; so similarly, when the mind and senses, usually so agitated by the qualities of pas-

sion and ignorance become a little quietened and there is a touch of the quality of goodness, then in that peaceful moment, and only in that moment, it is possible to hear the poignant cry of the jīva, so long afflicted by the feeling of alienation. Even though it is not possible to hear the jīva's song of suffering directly as he sits enchained by Māyā shackles due to her coverings of passion and ignorance—still the agitation and dissatisfaction of the jīvas all over the universe, which is daily being manifested in myriad ways in the external world, if followed to its very roots will be recognized as the pained sob, or proof of the existence of the ever-weeping fallen soul.

The scriptures say that the Lord has potencies which are inherent in Him the way that there is odour in musk or the sun has its rays. Although one cannot say the sun and its rays, or the musk and its scent, are completely non-different, still they have a relationship of being simultaneously one and different as cause and effect or shelter and dependent. In the same way, the Supreme Lord is non-different from His energies and yet He is eternally different as the cause of an effect, the shelter of His dependents and the object of the service of His servitors. Just as the sun cannot be thought of without its rays and vice-versa, similarly the Supreme Lord has no meaning without His energies nor could the energies have any existence without Him. Only the Supreme Lord is the universal controller, the possessor of all energies,

the resting place of all creation, the ultimate cause and supreme truth ("mattah parataram nānyat kiñcid asti Dhanañjaya" B.G. 7.7 Krishna says, "There is no truth superior to Me, oh Dhananjaya"). Even so, it should be understood that the Lord and His energies are one and yet, at the same time, are not one. Again, He and His energies are different, but simultaneously not different also. In this way there exists an amazing and inconceivable relationship between them. He is the Supreme Controller and master of all potencies. This inconceivable potentiality is the expression of the "God-ness" of God. The Energetic and His energies are simultaneously identical and yet distinct—this is explained in the ninth chapter of the Bhāgavad-Gīta (9.4-5) and explained very clearly in the Chaitanya-Charitāmrita (Ādi 5.73-75)

"ei moto gitateho punah punah koy, sarvoda īśhwara-tattwa achintya shakti-may. āmi to jagate bosī, jagat āmāte, nā āmāte jagat boise, nā āmi jagate, achintya aiśhwarjya ei jānoho āmār, ei to gitar artha, koilo porochār."

"It is stated again and again in the Bhāgavad-Gīta that the Lord is possessed of inconceivable energies : 'I am within the universe, yet the universe rests in Me; and again, the universe does not rest in Me nor am I in the universe. Know that My opulences are incomprehensible.' Thus the meaning of the Gīta has being explained."

Just as a fountain of fire gushes out of a certain type of fire-cracker, so the energies of the Lord spring out of Him as the energies of the supreme cause. The fire sparks, and smoke all pour forth from the fire-cracker at the same time and yet the firecracker remains independent as the cause, so too, in the same way, the Supreme Lord is the resting place of unlimited energies and even though manifesting such infinite potencies in primarily three divisions, He remains aloof as the eternally independent form of bliss and knowledge. The three divisions of the Lord's energies are known as superior (parā), the knower of the field (ksetrajña—the jīva) and illusion (māyā).

*visnu-śaktih parā praktā, ksetrajñākhyā tathāparā
avidyā karma-sañjñākhyā trtiyā śaktir isyate.*

(VP 6.7.60).

"The Supreme Lord has three main divisions of energies; His personal internal energy is known as His superior (para) potency, the second is the living entity who is also called the knower of the field and the third energy is called ignorance or māyā." Another name for the superior potency is the internal energy; it can be compared to the flame of the fire. Another name for the living being is the marginal or medial potency or *jīva-śakti* and it can be compared to the sparks of the fire. The third energy, *māyā*, can also be called the external or material energy and can be compared to the fire's smoke. The Lord Him-

self, as the cause of all three, can be compared to the fire itself. ("yathāidraaidhāgnev abhyahitasya prthag ahūmā viniscaranti" Brihad Āranyaka 4.5).

Even though the Lord is transformed into countless universes by one undivided energy, still He reigns as the eternal, independent Supreme Potential. The scriptures have explained the mystery of the simultaneous inconceivable oneness and difference of the Lord and His energies with the help of this example of the fire.

*"eka-desa sthitasyāgne jyotsnā ivstainī yathā,
parasya brahmaṇah saktis tathedaṁ akhilam jagat."*
(VP 1.22.52)

"Just as fire simultaneously remains in one place and also spreads itself over a much larger area by its effulgence, so too the Supreme Brahma, Lord Hari, also remains in one place, in His own unique form, and yet manifests Himself by His energies everywhere in the infinite universes,"

The sum total of all the living beings (jīva-śakti) and the external energy is this material universe. The living entity is a fragmental portion of spiritual energy, i.e. a tiny individual atom of consciousness, and can thus be compared to an effulgent spark. The material energy, which is dull and without consciousness can be compared to the smoke which has a covering or obscuring nature. These two energies are most incompatible with one another. The *Upanishads*

also compare the jīva to the sparks of a fire, being many in number and very small.

“yathā sudiptāt pāvakāt visphulingāh, sahasraśah prabhavante svarūpāh,

tathāksarāt vividhāh saumya bhāvāh prajayante tatra caivapi yanti” (Muṇḍaka U. 2.1.1)

“Oh gentle one! Just as thousands of sparks disperse from a blazing fire, all of which like to it, so the different varieties of living entities emanate from the indestructible Supreme Lord and again enter into Him.”

The *jīvas* are described as being countless, measureless atomic particles of spiritual energy, each one smaller than the ten-thousandth part of a hair tip.

*“keśāgra śata-bhāgasya śatāṁśa-sadrśatmakah
jīvah sūksma-svasupoyam saṅkhyātito he chit-kanah”*
(S.B.11)

Thus we have been able to understand that as countless infinitesimal particles of fire spring out of a flaming blaze-all of which are the same in quality as the original fire, in the same way, at the beginning of creation, unlimited numbers of living entities, sparks of eternity, knowledge and bliss or atomic particles of consciousness, emanated from God and at the time of universal dissolution they merge into Him and then they are again made manifest when there is a new universal creation. These uncountably numerous

particles of spiritual energy, are known as *jīvas* and they are eternal and their individual measure is thousands of times more subtle than the tip of a hair.

“īśhwarer tattwa joiche jjolito jjolon, jiber swarūp joiche sphulinger kon.”

“The nature of the Supreme Lord is likened to that of a blazing conflagration and the *jīvas* are compared to the sparks coming out of that fire .”

(CC Ādi 7.111)

Both the sparks and the smoke are energies of the fire, but of the two only the spark is able to display the light and heat-giving qualities of the fire—and not the smoke. Similarly, the living beings or *jīvas* and matter as both the energies of the Lord, yet it is only in the *jīva* that His eternal, blissful and cognizant qualities are extant and never in the dull matter or material energy also called *māyā*. So also, just as the sparks have the qualities of the fire in only fractional quantity, the *jīvas* have the same qualities as the Lord in only atomic quantity whereas He possesses them in full. The Lord is the infinite conscious entity and the *jīva* is the infinitesimal conscious entity. The quality of consciousness is the same in both of them but the vast difference in being infinite and infinitesimal set them apart irrevocably. Due to His being infinitely great, the Lord remains the master of the material energy eternally independent whereas the tiny speck of consciousness that is the *jīva* is always dependent and falls under the control of the

material energy. The darkness of the night is easily defeated by the intense light of the sun, but it swallows up the thin traces of light given out by the glow worms. In the same way, due to their differences in being the macro-conscious entity and the micro-conscious entities, the same *Māyā* who is ashamed to come before the Lord still overwhelms the infinitesimal *jīva* and makes him think that he is a product of matter and that the by-products of this body are his.

*“vilajjamanayā yasya sthātumiksā-pathe muyā,
vimohitā vikatthante mamāham iti durdhiyah”*

(S.B. 2.5.13)

“*Māyā* always feels discomfiture upon coming into the Lord’s range of vision, but the foolish living beings are bewildered by her and proudly think, “I am this body and all these things are mine.”

Any one thing taken either fractionally or entirely will result in other differences also, as the whole and the part. A nice example of this is given in the Vedic literatures :

*“vanāni dahate vahnih sakhā bhavati marutah,
sa eva dīpa-nāsāya, ksīne kasyāsti gauravah”*

The meaning of this verse is that the same wind that acts as a friendly assistant to the blazing forest fire is the extinguisher of the small and flickering candle flames. Therefore there is never any glory in being tiny.

The Sruti refers to the Supreme Lord as the immense form of *sat-chit-ānanda* or eternity, knowledge and bliss. (*mahāntam vibhum ātmānam...* Katha U. 1.2.22) and to the *jīva* as the miniscule form of *sat-chit-ānanda*. (*eso'nur ātmā...* Mund. U. 3.1.9) Although he is thus *sat-chit-ānanda* in his natural indentity, that atomic particle of consciousness called the *jīva* gets bound up by *Māyā*'s ropes of ignorance due to his minuteness and dissociation from the shelter of the Supreme Lord. Although the cause of the *jīva*'s coming under the influence of *Māyā* is the defect or fault known as aversion to the Supreme Lord, because they both exist since time immemorial the two situations exist simultaneously as cause and effect. Although it is well known that the seed is the cause of a tree, because of their mutual cause-effect relationship it is ultimately impossible to determine which came first, so similarly the cause of the living being's bondage is the repugnance of the Lord to him, still due to the timeless existence of both it is impossible to determine which came first. The fire and the light are related as cause and effect, but due to their simultaneous appearance since time immemorial they are taken as one unit. So similarly, even though the cause of the *jīva*'s entrapment in the snare of illusion is his aversion to the Supreme Lord, because they both exist since time immemorial they can be spoken of as being coinstantaneous.

*“krishna bhuli sei jīb anādi bahirmukho,
ata eb māyā tāre dey songsar duḥkhs”*

“The living being, being eternally indisposed to the service of the Lord forgets Him and thus *Māyā* makes him suffer the pangs of material life.”

Not being able to tolerate this forgetfulness and aversion on the part of the *jīva*, *Māyā* desires to correct him by punishing him in the way of making him suffer the distresses of material life. With that intention she first covers over the *jīva*’s understanding of his spiritual identity with her “*āvarika*” or covering potency and then creates the mistaken idea in him that the body is his real identity and his family and home etc. are his possessions with her *viksepikā* or hurling potency. The poisonous fruit of this self-forgetfulness is that due to association with matter and material activities the *jīva* has to take birth again and again in different varieties of bodies in accordance with his *karma* or work. This is the way of material existence or *samsāra*. Any living being who thus falls into material existence or *samsāra* has to suffer the three-fold miseries and he is always filled with fear due to his absorption in matter. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* we find the following teaching about the fearfulness of the living entities in the Eleventh Canto as part of the instructions of the nine great sages :

*“bhayam dvitīyabhiniveśataḥ syad
isād apetasya viparyayo’smṛtiḥ*

*tan-māyayāto butha abhajeṭ tam
bhaktyaikayesaṁ guru-devatatma*” (S.B. 11.2.37)

“*Māyā* causes the living entities who are averse to the Lord to forget their spiritual identity and thus their misconception of identity with the body arises. Being infatuated with the body and senses which are secondary existences there arises the feeling of fear. An intelligent person therefore thinks of his spiritual preceptor as worshipable and with such devotional feeling should worship the Supreme Lord.”

Consciousness or cognizance is the nature of the spiritual particle, the *jīva*; it is not a function of matter. The perception in the body of heat and cold, happiness and distress etc. is not a function of the body itself but that of the soul. Just as an iron rod which has been heated in a fire adopts the capacity to burn, so similarly symptoms of consciousness are observable in the material or non-conscious body only due to the individual *jīva*'s presence and absorption in that body. As soon as one puts the iron rod under water, however, its burning capacity is lost within a moment and one is able to understand that that capacity was something extrinsic to it—the power to burn was something that belonged to the fire and not to the iron. In the same way, whenever the body is abandoned by the soul then it is possible to understand that it was due to the presence of the soul that there were sensations of heat and cold etc. in the

body. That soul is the *jīva*, the spiritual particle, the real "I".

One may put a spot of yellow *chandan* on his forehead, but its fragrance and cooling ability spreads over the entire body. Similarly, the soul is sitting in only one place in the body, the heart ("hṛdi hy esa ātma" Praśna U. 3.6) but its spiritual influence spreads all over the body.

*"anumatro'py ayani jīvah sva-deham vyāpya tisthati
yathā vyāpya śārīrāni hāri-chandana-viprusah"*

(Brahmānda Purāna)

"The *jīva* is only atomic in size yet he expands all over the entire body in the same way that a spot of *hāri chandan* does."

Since extension is a quality of spirit it can be observed as a symptom of the soul. A lamp situated in one place in a room is able to extend itself over the entire room by its effulgence, so similarly the soul extends its energy of consciousness over the entire body even though it is situated in only one place.

That which is never destroyed is called eternal and that which never changes form or undergoes transformation is called unchanging. Spiritual energy is eternal and unchanging; therefore, because the soul is such a spiritual substance he is also eternal and unchanging. That which had no existence before it was created and will terminate with its destruction, which either was not or one day will not be is called

temporary. That item which undergoes a transformation of state or alternation of its basic qualities is called changing. Temporariness and change are the qualities of matter and thus we can see the basic nature of matter and spirit is conflicting. Therefore we conclude that those things which are eternal and non-changing are spiritual and that those things which are temporary and subject to transformation are material. These are the main clues in the task of distinguishing matter from spirit.

The body, senses, life air, mind, and intelligence cannot possibly be the self because, even though one identifies with them they are seen to have a beginning and an end. The body undergoes transformation, becoming fatter or thinner etc. and thus it is obviously a material thing whereas the soul is eternal and unchanging. He can also observe that the senses are distorted by blindness and deafness etc., the life airs undergo the changes in breathing and belching etc., and the mind is also disfigured by lust and anger etc. at the time of deep sleep the intelligence merges into its cause ignorance and thus it is also seen to have a beginning and an end—therefore it cannot possibly be the self either, that must be accepted. Just as the sky is pure by nature yet it is sometimes seen to be sullied by smoke and dust, so too the soul is beyond the states of wakefulness, sleep or deep sleep and remains a witness in all these states, but due to its connection with them is manifested in

degrees of consciousness called respectively *viśva*, *taijasa* and *pragñā* (dull, flickering and full blown). The whole machine of the body and senses may be asleep, but he who remains awake and duly awakens the rest, remembering and feeling everything, is the *jīvātmā* and he is the real self. Just as a very beautifully decorated sword remains hidden in its scabbard, so similarly the soul remains hidden within the gross, subtle and casual bodies, yet he is an eternal spiritual particle. The body and senses are not conscious of themselves but display the properties of consciousness due to the presence of the cognizant potency of the soul. This conclusion has been explained in the *Bhāgavad-gītā* by the Supreme Lord Himself:

*“Yathā prakāśayaty ekah kṛtsnam lokam imam raviḥ
kṣetram kṣetrī tāthā kṛtsnam prakāśayati bhārata.”*

(B 6.13. 33)

“Oh Bhāraṭ! Arjuna! Just as the sun lights up the entire solar system so too the soul within the body illuminates the entire body with consciousness.”

Although the dark universe is lit up by its rays of light, still we call the sun the illuminator of the universe because it is the source of that arrangement of rays. similarly, although the individual soul's presence in the body causes it to take on symptoms of consciousness, still the cause and shelter of that *jīva* is the infinitely cognizant and supreme energetic, the sun-globe of spiritual energy; the Supreme Lord is

the source of that fragmental appearance of consciousness. The Supreme Lord, cause of all causes and master of all energies is by His inconceivable potency unique and intact, yet He resides within every body occupied by a *jīva* as the Supersoul or *Paramātmā*. Both the existence of the body and the individual soul are maintained by His presense there. Just as the sun's rays are no longer visible after the sunset or just as the effulgence of a candle is no longer present after the flame has been extinguished, so similarly if the supersoul does not occupy the body then there is no possibility that the *jīva*, who is His energy, can remain there. It is a fact that the presence of the *jīva*, the atomic spiritual particle, is the cause of the dull body's taking on the appearance of being conscious, but since the supersoul is the ultimate cause of the *jīva*'s potency and his shelter He should be known to be the supreme cause. The *jīva* is covered over by nescience since time immemorial, yet for as long as he goes on taking different bodies as the result of his *karma* or activities, the Supreme Lord accompanies him and remains with him in each body as his refuge.

Although both the individual and supreme souls are present in the same material body, side by side, still the *jīva* is minisoul and is apathetic to the Lord and is thus influenced by the results of his own activities or *karma*. On the other hand, the Lord is always the controller of the material energy and is known as

the supreme consciousness. Needless to say, therefore, He can never be influenced by ignorance like the fragmental living being. The supersoul is also called *antaryāmi*, the in-dwelling resident of the heart of every living being. He Himself remains untouched and unattached, yet He watches the activities of the *jīva* and how he suffers the results of those activities. The Srutis have therefore compared the body to a tree upon the branches of which two birds, namely the soul and supersoul, are sitting as dear friends—but of the two, one is non-involved and the other is entangled.

*“dvā suparnā sayujā sakhāyā
samānam vrksam pariśaṣvajāte
tayor anyah pippalam svadvatty
anaśnan anyo’bhicakaśīti.*

(Svet. U. 4-5)

“The supersoul and the individual soul are two friendly birds sitting on the same branch of the same tree, but the one bird (the *jīva*) is busily tasting the sweet fruits of the tree while the other (the *Paramātmā*) is watching him without partaking of the fruits Himself.”

When the living entity is forced by his accumulation of *karma* to leave the worn habitation of his old body to take on a new one, he is helplessly forced to leave all his friends and relatives. In that distressed and futile condition his only associate is the

Paramātmā, who is a friend dearer than his very self. By the force of his karma the *jīva* may have to take birth in the body of any creature, locomotive or stationary, he may take the body of a demigod, man or sub-human, insect or any other respectable or despicable form, yet whichever body he may have to enter, the supersoul never abandons his friend for even a moment but follows him as his eternal companion, his eternal refuge. Just as a mother takes her unconscious child on her lap and gazes at his distorted and colorless face with unblinking eyes, day and night waiting for signs of recovery, so similarly the supersoul the *Paramātmā*, who is more closely related to the *jīva* than his own mother, sitting within the same body takes him on His lap in affection and watches him absorbed in his dream of material life, distorted by the disease of ignorance and misidentification with the body. The *jīva* scurries along the road of material life like a fatigued traveller carrying the burden of his past deeds on his shoulders and the *Paramātmā* accompanies him like a dear comrade just to help him maintain his life. Behind this great journey of the *jīva* and the Supreme Lord along the desert trail of material existence a great purpose is hidden. That purpose is that the stupified *jīva* when by some great fortune regains his consciousness and becomes fully aware of his real identity and function is able to understand clearly and completely that the happiness which he has been seeking for, age after age, in body

after body, running towards the external world, has its source within and not outside of himself. When the *jīva* uncovers this mystery he stops looking externally and, turning around, he becomes introspective and seeing the *Paramātmā* there within his very self, more dear than life itself, he clutches him to his chest in embrace. The Supreme soul is more dear to the *jīva* than anyone and He remains with him through birth and death, waiting for that one auspicious moment when he will arise out of the tremendous darkness of his ignorance. Just as a maiden bound up in multiple bonds of affection by her dearest lover momentarily loses her memory of who she is when she sees him on account of her great ecstasy, so too the *jīva*, after awakening to his spiritual nature, in the jubilation of seeing the supersoul directly and being embraced tightly by Him, also forgets his identity once again. The greatest difference in these two kinds of forgetfulness is that one is caused by ignorance and the other by ecstasy. That self-forgetfulness born of ignorance is called insentience and that born of ecstasy is the greatest prize of the fullblossomed self-realization of the individual soul.

Giving the above-mentioned example, the Śrūtis have given a hint at what the ecstasy of the reunion of the soul and supersoul is like :

*“tad yathā priyayā strīyā samparisvaktō
na bahyam kiñcana veda nāntaram evam evāyaṁ*

*purusah prajñenātmanā samparisvaktō
na bāhyam kiñcana veda nāntaram*"

(*Bṛihadāranyaka U. 4.3.21*)

"Just as in this world a man embraced by his most dear wife forgets all things both internal and external, so too the *jīva* when he is embraced by the omniscient Supreme Lord, forgets himself and becomes unable to distinguish inside from out."

Just as the body and senses which house the spiritual particle, the individual soul, and his refuge, the Supreme Soul, displays the symptoms of consciousness due to their presence, so too the entire macrocosm of the unlimited universes of creation displays the manifold symptoms of life and activity due to the inconceivable potency of the *jīvas* and the *Paramātmā* dwelling within all bodies. Although the *Paramātmā* is one undivided entity, till He enters separately into every individual body by His inconceivable potency and by means of His energy, the individual soul, He gives consciousness to the insentient body. That same *Paramātmā* also acts as the supersoul for the entire universe which he activates by awakening the aggregate of *jīvas* to action. The controlling force which organizes the entire material universe rests in that indwelling supersoul. His existence is the foundation and maintenance of all existences. As long as He remains in the body it will never become a corpse, and similarly the universe will never face destruction

as long as He is present within it. He is the indwelling force of everything small or great.

*“tat sṛṣṭvā tad evānupraviśat,
tad anupraviśya sac ca tac cābhavat” (Taitt. U. 2.6.2)*

“After the Supreme Lord creates the entirety of material existence He enters into it. After entering into the universe He became both the formed and the formless”.

That regulative principle which determines the changes of generation, sustenance and dissolution in the microcosmic individual body and that in the macrocosmic universal body are the same. A limited ability to regulate is present in the *jīva* due to his atomic size and that ability is fully present in the all-expansive Supreme Consciousness. Regulation is one of the functions of consciousness and not one of matter. Even though we see material things acting under the force of many laws, we should understand that it is always due to the presence of some regulating conscious entity. Consciousness is the determinant of all regulation whereas matter remains dependent on and engaged by it. Both the body and the universe are material things therefore they only take on the feature of regulation when they get the help or shelter of the cognizant potency. Due to the presence of the supersoul the existence of the body is maintained and it goes through the regulated changes of infancy, adolescence and maturity, so in

the same way also when the Supreme Soul enters into the universe it is maintained within infinite space and it undergoes the regulated changes of morning, noon and night or summer, autumn, winter and spring etc.

The *Paramātmā* is the soul of the individual soul and as long as He remains present in the individual body the bodily fluids and blood flow through it, the inhalation and exhalation of air, the growth of hair on the body and head, nails and teeth etc. , the arising and mitigation of hunger and thirst, wakefulness and sleep, hope, enthusiasm and many other moods and functions are all observable in it. In the same way, as long as the same Universal Soul is present in the universe then the unlimited solar systems revolve in their designated orbits, the billowing waves can be seen in the ocean, the rivers and streams flow tirelessly toward the seas; as long as that master of the cosmos remains as the in-dwelling Universal Supersoul the Earth will be moistened by the showers of the rainy season which will follow the dryness and torrid heat of the summer; the spring will revivify the Earth with freshness and enthusiasm after the torpor and depression of the winter, the days and nights, fortnights, months and years will go by in their regular course; wind, rain, lightning, fog and all other transformations of the weather will take place. As long as the Supreme Controller resides in the universe as its Supersoul there will be the sprouting of new greenery, beautiful crops, trees and creepers on

the dusty face of the Earth; their leaves, fruits and flowers will be appreciable in variegated colours, flavors and odours, as if the Earth was being adorned and beautified in newer and newer ways by Nature just like a doting mother dresses and decorates her child a dozen times in an hour. All these wondrous symptoms of life are not the glories of matter alone, but are the glory of the presence of the Supersoul. When the Supersoul departs from the gross body with the *jīva* then the body is destroyed and its constituent elements merge into the sum total of matter, so similarly when the Universal Soul departs from the universe along with the aggregate of all living beings, then the universe merges into the Causal Ocean, the ocean of dissolution. Just as there is oil invisibly present in a sesame seed, so too the Supreme Soul maintains the universal existence without being seen. The individual soul and body as well as the cosmic entirety are regulated and managed by His presence, by His laws and discipline. The Mother *Śrutis* speak in a voice as deep as the ocean to cure the *jīvas* of their disease of blindness their materialistic ignorance by giving the appropriate medicine of knowledge :
"etasya vā aksarasya praśāsane gārgī

*dyāv-āprthivyaṁ vidhṛte tiṣṭhata etasya vā akṣarasya
 praśāsane gārgī nimeṣa mūhurtā aho-rātrgny
 arddhamāsā stavah saṁvatsarā iti vidhṛtas tiṣṭhante
 etasya vā akṣarasya praśāsane gārgī pracyo'nyā nadyah*

*syandante śvetebhy parvatebhyah prāticys'nyal yām yām
ca diśam anu".*

(Bṛihad-āranyak U. 3.8.9)

“Yājñavalkya said, “oh Gārgī, by the order of the undivided Supreme Person the sun and moon maintain their positions in the firmament; by His order the Earth and heavens were created and maintained; by His order all the measurements of time, the moment, the hour, the day and night, the fortnight, month, the season and year, were all created and are maintained; by His order the rivers come down from the snowy peaks of the Himalayas and flow in all the different directions.”

The individual body is the habitaion of the individual *jīva* and similarly the fourteen planetary systems of the universe make up the body or habitation of the aggregate *jīva*. In each universe this aggregate *jīva* is known as the *Hiranyagarbha* or *Brahma*. He is the personification of the aggregate of all the living entities i.e. their predominating deity or demigod. Just as the Ganges is a river which is non-different from a personality who is its personification or predominating deity, *Gangā-devī*, so too *Brahmā* is non-different from the entirety of living beings in the universe. Just as the departure of the *Paramātmā* with the individual soul from the body results in its death, so similarly, at the end of *Brahmā*'s lifetime of two *parārdhas*, when he and the the Universal Supersoul

leave this *brahmāṇḍa* or universe, then that body of the aggregate *jīva* dies and, being dissolved, merges into the Lord lying on the Causal Ocean. When the material energy becomes beset with debility after many eons of expediting the results of the aggregate *jīva*'s pious and sinful activities and thus arranging for his suffering and enjoyment, then that energy, along with the countless *jīvas*, merges into the body of the Supreme Lord. At that time, no signs of life, no names or forms remain of the cosmos, only He, the Puruash remains [“*eka ha vai Nārāyaṇa āsīt*” (*Maha U.*)” In the beginning there was only Nārāyaṇa”]. When the Lord, out of His desire for amusement again wishes to create the universe, then He revives the aggregate living entity and material energy from their unmanifest state and engages them in activities once again. [“*so'kāmayata bahu syām prajāyayeti*” (*Taittiriya U. 2.6.2*) “He desired, I will become many and create offspring.”] In this way, the unlimited beings along with the unlimited material universes are manifested at the time of creation and unmanifested at the time of dissolution. This has been going since beginningless time and will continue to go on.

The Supreme Lord is only one, yet for different functions in the universe He takes on many different names and forms by His inconceivable potency and displays them eternally. That one, supremely majestic personality, full with six opulences, appears in His personal expansion as.

the Supersoul of material nature as a whole—at that time He is known as the first *Puruṣhāvatār* or *Mahā Viṣṇu*. Because He lies on the Causal Ocean, He is also known as *kāraṇ-Arṇava-Śāyī Viṣṇu* (*kāraṇ*—cause, *orna*—ocean, *Śāyī*—he who lies). That *Māyā Viṣṇu* glances at material (mother) nature desiring to recreate the dissolved universes; that first glance of the *Puruṣh* is His resolution to create. By that glance of the *Puruṣh* the material nature which was quiet becomes agitated. Out of that agitation the universes are progressively created starting from the *mahat-tattwa* or creative foundation. That first *Puruṣh avatār*, although one undivided entity, He takes unlimited forms and enters into each universal shell and becomes its Supersoul. In all His forms He maintains His Godly nature. The second *Puruṣh avatār* is called *Garbhodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu* (*garbha*—the universal shell, *Udaka*—water, *śāyī*—who lies upon). From His lotus navel sprouts the lotus flower and stem in which the aggregate *jīva* or *Hiranyagarbha* and the fourteen planetary systems are all contained. This second *Puruṣh* is also one, single undivided entity, but when He manifests Himself unlimitedly in every universe, in the heart of every individual, preserving the existence of each one, then He becomes the third *Puruṣh* or *Kṣhīrodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu*. This third *Puruṣh*, *Kṣhīrodaka-śāyī* is the supersoul of every living being. He alone is the

Supreme Soul who dwells in everything, everywhere. It is He who dwells within the material nature and makes her potent. It is He who is the foundation of the universe and beholds the entity of the universal shell, as the Universal Supersoul, and it is He alone who resides in the heart of every living entity and maintains their existence. That *Paramātmā* is the soul of every individual soul and He is the resting place of the universe as the Universal Supersoul. The following statement about these three *Puruṣh avatars* is found the scriptures (*Sātvata-Tantra*).

*“Viṣṇoḥ tu trīṇi rūpāṇi prauṣākhyāny atho viduḥ
ekam tu mahataḥ sraṣṭa, dvitīyas to anda-saṁsthitam
trīyaṁ sarva-bhūta-sthaṁ tānī jñātvā vimucyate.”*

“The Supreme Lord has three forms described in the scriptures as *Puruṣh*. The first *Puruṣh* is the Supersoul of the entire material nature and is the creator of the *mahat-tattva* (the basis of the material creation). The second *Puruṣh* is the in-dwelling Supersoul of each individual universe or aggregate *jīva* and the third *Puruṣh* is the indwelling Supersoul of every living being.”

Just as one must approach the flame to understand the effulgence which emanates from it, so too when searching out the identity of the individual soul we find ourselves confronted with the problem of knowing the Supreme Soul. Even though one small flame

may give off a little light, still the sun is the ultimate cause of all effulgent objects; similarly, He Whose partial personal manifestation is the *Paramātmā* is the Supreme Whole, Controller and cause. When searching out the ultimate cause of all causes, that truth at Whose feet all inquiries come to rest should be known as the Supreme controller, Supreme truth and Supreme worshipable object. The *Śrutis* have announced that that supreme worshipable object is *Śrī Krishna*—

“tasmāt kṛṣṇa eva paro devah” (Gopal U. Purva 49)
 “The Supreme Deity is Krishna alone.” He is not simply a *Purushāvatār*, He is the *avatārī* or the source of all *avatārs* or incarnations. Thus His form can be called the original or ultimate form of Godhead, *swayam rūp*.

That form of the Supreme Lord upon which all other forms depend and which in turn depends on no other form is called *swayam-rūp*.

“ananyāpeksā yad-rūpam swayam-rūpah sa ucyate.”
 (Laghu Bhag. 1.12)

“That form of the Supreme Lord which is completely independent and self-sufficient is called *swayam rūp*”.

All the incarnations or *avatāras* and pastime forms which emanate from the *avatārī* or *swayam rūp* may seem different in appearance etc. but They are in no way different from it, i.e. They are identical in es-

sence. This is called *tad-ekatmā-rūp* (*tad*—His, *eka*—one, *ātma*—self, *rūpa*—form) and has been described in the *Laghu Bhāgavatāmṛitam* as follows :

“*yad rūpaṁ tad-abhedena svarūpena virājate
abrtyādibhir anyā-dsk sa tad-ekātma-rūpakāḥ*”

“That form which is non-different from the original form or *swayam rūp* and yet if manifest in a form different from it is known as a *tad-ekātma* form.”

(L.B. 1.14)

Although there is thus no difference between the *swayam-rūp* and the *tad-ekātma-rūpa*, still the *swayam-rūp* of the Lord is completely self-sufficient whereas the *tad-ekātma-rūp* depends on the *swayam-rūp*, i.e. the *swayam-rūp* exists fully independently of the partial and pastime forms which are otherwise known as *tadekātma* forms. Those personal expansions and pastime forms of the Lord exist dependent on His original form called *swayam-rūp* : For this reason the *swayam rūp* is said to be the most complete form of the Lord and the cause of every thing else including all other incarnations and forms of Godhead.

The *swayam rūp* of the Lord is called in the scriptures, *Swayam Bhagavān* or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and other Vedic scripture have glorified the form of Sri Krishna as being that Supreme Personality of Godhead. “*kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*” (S.B. 1.3.28) “Krishna is the

Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.” That Superme Personality, Lord Sri Krishna, is completely self-sufficient, but all His pastime forms such as *Nārāyaṇ*, *Vāsudev*, *Sankarṣaṇ* etc., His incarnations like *Rām* and *Nṛsiṅha* etc., as well as His personal portions like the *Puruṣh* are indifferent of Him and they are also portions of Him, but still they are not completely self-sufficient; all other forms of Godhead are dependent on Śrī Krishna. Therefore, the Supersoul of every *jīva*, who maintains and preserves his existence, even though He is the one shelter or refuge of the *jīva*, still He has as His cause the supreme whole, original form of Godhead, Lord Sri Krishna. That Lord Krishna is therefore the ultimate refuge or resting place and cause of all the living beings, and is known as the Superme Personality of Godhead. The scriptures clearly state that the *Paramātmā* is Śrī Krishna’s expansion.

*“Kṛṣṇam enam avehi tvam ātmānam abhitatmanām
jagad-dhitāya so’py atra dehīvādhātī māyayā.*

“(SB. 10, 14, 55)

“You should know that this *kṛṣṇa* is the soul of all souls. even though that is His constitutional position, still He has covered that majesty of His by His illusory potency and has appeared in this world like an ordinary embodied *jīva* for its welfare”

He can know this from direct statements of the Supreme lord Himself:

*“athavā bahunaitina kiṁ jñātina tavārjuna
viṣṭabhyāham idam kṛtsnam ekāmsena sthito jagat”.*

(BG 10.42)

“Hey Arjuna ! What is the need of all this detailed information about My opulences ? By My one portion, namely *Paramātmā*, permeate and support the entire universe.”

Previously we called the *Paramātmā* the refuge of all living beings, yet that *Paramātmā* is only a portion of the Supreme Lord at Whose shelter He also finds His perfection and fulfillment. Therefore it should be known that the final cause and supreme refuge of all *jīvas* is the ultimate or complete *Paramātmā*, Lord Sri Krishna. Therefore the scriptures say:

*“īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sat-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam.”*

(BS. 5.1)

“Lord Sri Krishna is the supreme controller Who has a form of eternity, knowledge and bliss, *sat-chit-ānanda*; He is the beginning of everything, yet He Himself has no beginning. He is also known as Govinda, the cowherd of Vṛindāvan, yet He is the Supreme Cause of all causes.”

The self is the most dear thing. More dear than him is the Superself and the Superself's most ultimate condition is the most dear of all. Therefore the only true function of the living entity is to engage in His worship, and by that He will find complete fulfil-

ment. Thus the *Śruti* says, "*taṁ dhyāyet, taṁ raset, taṁ bhajet, taṁ yajet.*" (STU. P. 49) "Meditate on that Sri Krishna, relish loving devotion to Him, worship Him and serve Him."

The truth of Lord Krishna is personified eternity, knowledge and bliss and is the ultimate form of the Supersoul. As a result, He is the spiritual fragment or *jīva*'s most close relative, protective shelter and supreme object of worship. Both the *jīva* and *Krishna* can be called *ātmā* as the *jīva* is also an eternal sat-chit-ānanda like Krishna, yet because Krishna is the infinite being and the *jīva* is infinitesimal their relationship is that of the shelter and the sheltered. The shelter is by nature the object of service and the sheltered is endowed with the nature of a servitor. Therefore the eternal servant of the supreme object of service is the individual living being. That fragmental portion of spirit known as the *jīva* is Krishna's marginal potency. Although one in the qualities of consciousness etc., because they are respectively the Supreme and the minute, the shelter and the sheltered, the object of service and the servant, Krishna and the living entity are eternally different from one another. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu first answered Sanatan Goswāmi by saying,

*"jīver swarūp hoy nitya kṛishṇa dās,
kṛishṇer taṭastha-śakti bhedābed prakāśh."*

“The true nature of the *jīva* is that he is the eternal servant of the Supreme Lord Krishna. He is Krishna’s marginal potency, simultaneously one and different from Him.” (CC Madhya 20. 10).

Even though the *jīva* is thus the eternal servant of Krishna he has assumed himself to be the eternal servant of *Māyā* and so, instead of experiencing the ecstasy of love for Krishna he has to burn in the fire of desire for material sense objects. The root cause of all his suffering is a simple misconception. Due to his timeless resistance to the loving service of the Lord and the consequent forgetfulness of his spiritual identity, the *jīva* takes his real identity to be the material body even though he is in fact a transcendental being. Therefore, due to this mistake all his calculations in the arithmetics of life are erroneous from beginning to end.

The medial energy living entity has basically two kinds of self-identification—one where he identifies himself as spirit, the other as matter. The former leads to advancement and the latter to debasement. These two types of attitude can also be called introversion and extroversion. No living being can remain without following one of these two paths. The self-conception of the *jīva* or sense of “I” when applied to spirit should be understood as his real nature, and when applied to the material body and senses it should be known to be distorted. Because the *jīva* is

able to follow both these paths of self-conception he has been called *taṭastha-śhakti* or the medial potency ("marginal potency" by some). This medial quality (*taṭa*—shore, *stha*—situated; *śhakti*—energy) of the living being takes on other appearances also. There are countless living beings who have followed in the footsteps of the eternally perfected companions and associates of the Supreme Lord and have thus identified with and absorbed themselves in His internal or personal energy. They are known as *nitya-mukta* or eternally liberated and they relish the happiness of serving the Lord, thus attaining complete fulfilment. The other living entities are those who are extrospective and identify themselves with the external energy known as *Māyā*. Taking on material qualities and following the dictates of illusion they eternally suffer the pangs of repeated birth and death in the material world. If by some great fortune, if any *jīva* should get the association of a saintly person or the scriptures and become directed to the Lord by their grace, then he can also become a liberated soul by the practice of pure devotion. The *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita* has described both types of living beings as follows:

"The separated fragments of the Lord are of two types: one is eternally liberated and one in eternal bondage. The liberated soul is always directed to The Supreme Lord's lotus feet; he is known as the Lord's

personal associate and always enjoys the pleasure of personally serving him. The eternally bound *jīva* is always averse to the Lord and suffers repeated birth and death and hellish existence. The ghost of illusion haunts and punishes him due to his fault of apathy to the Lord and he constantly has to undergo the three types of material misery. He becomes the servant of lust and anger and has to take the thrashing they give. In this way he wanders and wanders throughout the universe until finally he gets the good fortune to associate with a *sādhū* or saintly person who is like a physician. That physician gives the medicine in the form of instructions and causes the ghost to flee. Then the *jīva* is left free to serve Lord Krishna and ultimately go to Him. (Madhya 22.8.13)

The spiritual and material elements are antonymous or contradictory by nature. The natural inclination of the part is to mix with the whole. Therefore partial space merges in the whole of vast outer space, small pockets of air mix with the mass of air, the small drops of water go off in search of large bodies of water and every solid earthen item wants a place on the surface of the Earth. Just as it is the nature of "like to seek like" in the material elements, its also the natural inclination of the spiritual particle to seek union with the Supreme Spirit. The inclination of the *jīva* who is under the influence of ignorance is to reject his supreme spiritual counterpart to unnaturally identify with the antonymous material nature.

This should be understood as a perversion of his real nature. The personification of supreme consciousness and pleasure is Sri Krishna; He is the fullest revelation of the Supreme Spirit. Therefore, the *jīva* who is most fully realized of his own spiritual identity will take full shelter of Lord Krishna. Those *jīvas* who are like bees eager for the honey of Lord Govinda's lotus feet are the only ones who can claim to have attained the highest fulfilment of life. Only they have been able to gain the ultimate goal of existence.

Just like different colors like red, yellow and blue come out of the lapis lazuli stone, so also the omnipotent Supreme Lord has many inherent and dependent energies. ("*ya eko'varṇobahudha śakti-yogāt*" Svet 11. 4—1. "That Lord is unique and distinct, yet He becomes many by His various potencies.") Of these potencies, three are predominant, namely (1) His internal pleasure potency or *swarūp-śakti*; (2) His borderline potency, the *jīva* or *taṭastha-śakti* and (3) the external potency also called *Māyā* or the *bahiranga śakti*. Of these three energies, only the *jīva* can be called medial because he is possessed of an inclination in either direction—he must identify or take on the properties of either one of the internal or external potencies. In this reason, the introspective living beings coexist with the spiritual or internal energy (*swarūp śakti*) whereas the extrospective living entities identify with and take on the properties of the material potency. Because the *jīva* is incapable of re-

maintaining independent and self sufficient without absorption in one of these two natures he is called *taṭastha*. The other two energies, namely the internal and external, remain complete in themselves and never mingle or take on the qualities of any other energy. This is the main distinction between the living entity and the other two potencies. Just as an iron rod placed in fire, although taking on the redness etc. of fire, does not fully become fire completely discarding its iron-ness, so too the *jīva*, although he may take on the properties of either the *swarup-śakti* or *māyā-śakti* and become absorbed in them, still he never completely loses his individuality to merge with those energies in all respects. The reason for this is that each energy has eternal uniqueness. Therefore, even though the *jīva* may show some similarities to the internal potency in terms of its spirituality, nevertheless the three aspects of spiritual nature, namely eternity, cognizance and beatitude all exclusive functions of the internal energy. They are not the qualities of the marginal or external energies.

The only means to influence the Supreme Lord is by pure devotion, i.e. that devotion which is devoid of material qualities. This devotion can be called the Godly function (*bhāgavatī-vṛtti*). This "Godly function" or devotion is the essence of the internal potency's aspects of cognizance and beatitude. (*hlādinī-śāra-samaveta-samvit-sāra-rūpeli-*" *siddhanta-ratnam* 1.8). Therefore it is not innate function of the medial or

intermediate potency, the living entity, nor it is the work of the inferior or material energy. Like the Ganges which flows down to the Earth from the heavenly planets, the river of devotion, which is the internal potency's active aspect, flows down from the personal associates of the Lord in His abode, through the channel of the succession of unalloyed devotees into the material world.

That pure devotion emerges in the heart of a *jīva* only as a result of coming in contact with that channel of the causeless association of pure devotees. The association of such great persons and the consequent hearing of the topics of the Supreme Lord are the combined cause by which the self-manifesting or self-revealing pure devotion dawns in the heart of a *jīva*. Other than this there is no means for attaining pure *bhakti*.

*“sataṁ prasaṅgān mama vīrya-saṁvido
bhavanti hṛt-kaṣṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ
taj joṣayaty āśu apavarga-vartmaṇi
śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramisyati”* (S.B. 3.25.24)

The Supreme Lord said, “When one is blissed by the concentrated association of saintly persons, then many topics revealing My glories (i.e. My name, form, qualities and pastimes) are heard, all of which give pleasure to both the ears and the heart. Enjoying such topics in the company of the devotees śraddha, faith (i.e. the faithful performance of regulated devotional

service), devotional feeling or *bhava* (i.e. the emotional stage of devotional life) and *bhakti* or pure devotion (i.e. *prem* or pure love) for Krishna Who is the only cause for liberation all appear in the heart of the devotee seccessively.”

The Supreme Lord makes similar statements in other places also in the same *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*:

“*prāyena bhakti-yogena sat-saṅgena vinoddhava
nopāyo vidyate samyag prāyanam hi satām aham*”
(S.B 11.11.46)

“Oh Uddhava, there is practically speaking no means to attain pure love for Me other than through the association of holy persons and the practices of hearing and glorification which are only available through them. Both these things together are the causes of pure devotion. The reason for this is that I am the main refuge of the saintty.”

The same thing is found in another place again in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*:

“*sat-sanga labdhayā bhaktyā...*” (11.11.24) “By means of that devotion which is only obtainable through the *sādhus...*” Again the same fact is repeated in the *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita*: “*sādhu-kripā-nam binā prem nāhi hoy.*” “Without a hint of the benediction of an advanced devotee and the chanting of the Holy Name, one can never get love of God.” Both causes simultaneously work in union to bring about the dawning of pure devotion. Therefore, the company

of devotees is called the cause of the birth loving devotion to Lord Krishna.

Therefore, although the medially a marginally situated energy, the *jīva*, does not possess such *bhakti* to the Lord of his own due to its being a function of the internal potency, still "*Kṛishṇa-dāsyā*" or for the nature of subservience or servitude to the Lord is an inherent quality of the living being which is always situated in him. The reason for this is that the Supreme Lord is the controller of all energies and He is related with His potencies as the shelter and the sheltered and consequently as the served and servitor, master and minion. This relationship is eternally and naturally existing. Then the *jīva* comes under the influence of *Māyā* and thinks himself to be a servant of matter then his identity as the servant of Krishna becomes lost to vision and unmanifest. Thus the living being, even though he is Krishna's servant by nature, due to his perpetual aversion to Him, he cannot think of Him as his eternal master nor can he spontaneously remember Him. At the touch of the great devotees' mercy, the *jīva* awakens like the fairy-tale princess touched by the golden magic wand and remembers himself as the eternal servant of Krishna. When he starts thinking of himself in that way, then his various delirious rantings such as "I am the doer, I am the enjoyer" all come to stop and the pure and proper conceptions arise, e.g. "I am the servant of Krishna. He is the lord and master, I am His subordinate and

servant.” This is called the inclination or tendency toward Krishna (*Krishna-unmukhatā*). By the touch of saintly company this proclivity towards the Lord appears, and when accompanied simultaneously by the disposition to serve Him devotedly then that self-manifesting *bhakti* appears on the favorably disposed tongue and other senses in the form of chanting Krishna’s Holy Names etc.. Otherwise *bhakti*, in those forms, is never experienceable by the material senses.

*“ataḥ sri-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ”*

(B.R.S 1.2.234)

By practicing or cultivating devotion the marginally situated *jīva* gradually gives up his sense of oneness with matter and begins to identify himself with the internal energy of the Lord. As a result he attains the most wonderful prize of all and becomes completely fulfilled. Even though fire is present with in wood, unless it comes into contact with an already ignited flame the fire inherent in it will never be revealed but will remain invisible. Similarly, the concept that “I am a servant of God”; although something intrinsic to his nature, remains invisible and unmanifest due to his perpetual aversion to the Lord and it should be understood that such a conception only becomes apparent when contact is made with the blazing devotional fire of those who are fully absorbed in the internal energy of the Lord. Therefore

it is concluded that the only cause of the first appearance of the inclination to bring the forgotten Lord Krishna into his mind is the powerful association of saintly persons and service to them. The Lord Himself says, "*mat-smṛtiḥ sādhu swayā.*" (S.B. 11.11.45) "The only means to awaken ones lost remembrance of Me is through service to the holy."

Therefore it should be understood that service to the Supreme is the innate function of every living entity. The spirit of devotion, however, is a function of the internal or personal energy of the Lord and therefore is not inherent in the medial potency, the *jīva*, nor can it be found in the inferior or base material potency. The heavenly Ganges of pure devotion springs from that internal energy and flowing through the eternal companions of the sportive Supreme Lord comes down to the material world through the channel of the pure devotees of the present day. The association of such devotees is unpredictable, but even so it is the first cause of the awakening of the proclivity to the Lord, to awakening his lost memory of Krishna. Combined with that is an inclination to serve Him which results in the lifting of the curtain of ignorance in the form of the igotistical conceptions of lordship and doership, leaving instead the true conception that "I am Krishna's servant. He is the master and supreme of object of service and I am meant to serve Him". With this change the living entity becomes a pure *jīva*. In that condition self-manifesting

bhakti in the form of the topics of the Supreme Lord Krishna generated from the sadhus appears on the tongue, ears and other senses of that favorably disposed living being in the practice of hearing and chanting. In this way, when the practice of devotional service in the forms of chanting and hearing etc. becomes gradually transformed through the stages of faith and attachment until it finally becomes love for Krishna or Krishna prem.

The first cause of the survival of the innate favorableness to the Supreme Lord appearing in the heart of the devotee is the hearing of discussions related to the Lord from advanced devotees. With the simultaneous appearance of these two causes it becomes possible for the *jīva* to attain the most exalted function of the internal potency, devotion, despite being of the marginal potency himself.

Therefore, the proclivity to the service of the Lord is an innate function of the *jīva* and *bhakti* or devotion is an adventive function. Therefore in the assessment of the natural identity of the living entity it was not said that he is the eternal devotee or *bhakta* of the Lord, but that he is Krishna's eternal servant. The result of such servitude to the Lord, or the inclination to Him is inevitably pure *bhakti* or the attainment of the position of a devotee. The favorably inclined servant of Krishna desires nothing-other than the Lord's happiness and wants nothing for himself. Therefore it is said;

*"krishna bhakta nishkām ataeb śhānta,
bhukti mukti siddhi kāmī sakalei ashānta."*

"The devotee of Lord Krishna is free from desire and therefore he is peaceful whereas others who are afflicted by desires for sense gratification, liberation or mystic perfections are all agitated and unpeaceful." (CC.Madhya 19.132)

Devotion has another aspect—this one not coming like the *Gangā* through the channel dug by the disciplic succession of pure devotees but standing within the material universe like a desire tree for the purpose of helping the impure desires of the living being to be fulfilled. The reason for this is that without devotion, even the desires of the *jīvas* for sense enjoyment (*bhukti*) salvation (*mukti*) or mystic perfection (*siddhi*) can never be fulfilled. ("*bhakti bina kono sādhan dite nāre phol*" (CC Madhya 24) "without bhakti no other practice can bear fruit.") In every other practice there is a necessity of adding or combining devotion in a partial way. Therefore, for such practitioners the processes of chanting and hearing Krishna's Names etc. and other devotional exercises are very performed due to their desires. By the un-failing association of the devotees, there is an awakening of remembrance of the forgotten Lord, and thus it is only in the *jīva* whose favorable inclination to Krishna has been aroused that there is not even a trace of dedication to his own happiness, but seeks

only the happiness of Sri Krishnā. In all other living beings who have never reaped the fruits of association of advanced devotees and are thus living without any proclivity toward His service, and egotistic conception that “I am the doer and I am the enjoyer” is seen to exist. For this reason all these other *jīvas* don’t desire for the service of the Lord, but out of ambitions for personal happiness consider religiosity, economic development, the fulfilment of sensual desires and salvation to be the ultimate goals of human life. Hence, they take the help of devotion as an additional practice for the fulfilment of their selfish interests. Devotional service by nature is untainted by matter, but the containers in which she appears may be tinged due to lack of *sādhū-sanga*, saintly association. When manifested in such an impure place she is called qualified devotion or *saguna-bhakti* (*sa*—with; *guṇā*—material qualities; *bhakti*—devotion) as opposed to pure devotion or *nirguṇā-bhakti* (*nir*—without; *guṇa*—material qualities). In the case of the former *bhakti* does not produce her main fruit of love for God (*prem*) but gives the secondary results of sense satisfaction, liberation or perfections as desired by the devotee.

Thus it should be understood that without the association of devotees and the resultant pure hearing and chanting of the Name and fame of the Supreme Lord there is no possibility of the appearance of pure devotion. Just as two causes, namely a potter and

mud, are both needed for a pot to be made so similarly these two causes of devotion, namely the association of devotees and the consequent practice of hearing and chanting, are both required for the attainment of *prem*. The mud itself without the help of a potter can never become a pot and so also the culture of the different practices of devotional service by the impure soul will never become love for God—but *bhakti* by her inconceivable potency frees those *jīvas* from countless sins and awards them their desired benedictions of material enjoyments, etc., all of which are merely her secondary gifts.

That which is that rightful heritage of the *jīva*, or that which he has the right to obtain, is called his legacy. By getting one's rightful claim no one is the gainer or the loser. Anything over and beyond the legacy is gain and similarly anything less than one's heritage can be considered a loss. The *jīva* should understand that as the medial or marginal energy, for him to identify with the inferior material energy and wander on the path of material existence, repeatedly undergoing the repeated processes of birth, growth, deterioration and death in many different bodies is nothing other than a colossal loss. For the eternal spiritual spark known as the *jīva* this is certainly nothing short of a great calamity and certainly there should be no obstacle to calling it that.

Mukti, or liberation, means the living entity's release from his self-identification with matter and his

becoming one with the *Brahma* from which he was created. (“*yato va imāni bhūtāni jāyante...*” (from whom all existences spring) “*janmādy asya yatah* (Brahma Sutra 1.1.2) from whom the creation, maintenance and destruction of these universes takes place.”) For the *jīva* to return from whence he came is certainly part of his legacy, attaining to which there is neither a question of gain or loss. Thus it should be understood that in the attainment of liberation there is no particular happiness or distress.

That attainment of the supercxcellent internal potency’s function of pure devotion is an achievement over and above the due legacy of the *jīva*, hence *bhakti* can be called the unexcelled goal of life for the living being. No one is happy unless he gets more than simply that “which is coming to him.” Only when one is able to attain the highest fulfilment by absorption in the internal energy of the Lord does the *jīva* become qualified to experience the supermost ecstasies like those of the pleasure potency itself. Therefore the attainment of *bhakti* should be known as the genuine gain of the living being. Thus the Supreme Lord has said, “*lābho mad-bhaktir uttamā*” (SB.11.19.40). “Devotion to me is the highest gain.” If devotion to God is the highest gain for the *jīva*, then devotion for Lord Krishna must be the most super-cxcellent gain of all, that can be easily understood. Therefore, in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, in connection with the extraordinary incarnation of the Su-

preme Lord Sri Krishna, i.e. Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, it is said that the presentation He made of Krishna *prem* in this Kali-yuga by preaching the chanting of the Holy Names was certainly the ultimate gain for the living beings.

*“na hy ataḥ paramo lābho dehinām bhrāmyatm iha
yato vindeta paramām śāntim naśyati saṁsṛtiḥ*

(SB.11.5.36)

“The supreme peace and liberation that can be attained from the chanting of Name and glories of the Lord or *saṅkīrtan* is the highest possible gain for the embodied souls who are wandering from body to body in this universe.”

Thus we have been able to understand that the company of *sādhus* is absolutely necessary for the re-awakening of the *jīva*'s lost consciousness of Krishna and the inclination to serve Him. Any other appearance of devotion that might take place, by her grace will be “qualified devotion” or *saguṇa-bhakti* and not pure devotion or *nirguṇa-bhakti* or *śuddha bhakti*. Therefore, the association of devotees, although it is very rare, difficult to recognize and yet infallible, causeless and unpredictable, still any *jīva* who wants to attain the highest welfare must make a determined effort to attain it. That is the direction of such *sādhus* themselves. Sridhar Swami has written, “*ato maṇiṣiṇa yatnaḥ kāryo mahad-anugrahe*”—(commentary on SB 7.1.1) “Intelligent persons will make an effort to at-

tain the mercy of great personalities.” In this connection one should look at the *Bhāgavatam* verse beginning with “*naisām matiḥ....*” (SB 7.5.32).

In the *Caitanya Charitāmṛita* it is also said:

“*sādhu saṅga, sādhu saṅga sarva śhāstra koy;
lobo mātra sādhu saṅge sarva siddhi hoy.*”

(CC Madhya 22.33)

“All the scriptures repeatedly glorify the association of saintly persons or *sādhu-saṅga*,” for by such association one can attain all perfection in life.

Śrīla Viśwanāth Chakravarty has also written, “*mahad-anugrahāt śraddha, śraddhato bhaktiḥ, bhaktiḥ premetyādi...*” (comment on SB 7.7.17). From the company of great personalities and their mercy one develops faith, from faith comes devotion and from devotion comes *prem* or love of God. This is the evolutionary development of devotion that is described in the scriptures.

So we have been able to understand that even though *bhakti* is an aspect of Krishna’s personal internal potency which makes its advent in the heart of a pure soul who has become inclined towards the Lord’s service by the grace of the great devotees, still as soon as the pure *jīva* becomes absorbed in the internal potency, because both he and *bhakti* are eternal substances, he never again becomes disjoined from her. For this reason, from that time on, of the nature of the *jīva* is that of a devotee and devotion

becomes his natural and spontaneous activity. Such an achievement is dependent on a great amount of good fortune and if it is attained it should be recognized as the penultimate achievement of the individual. For the *jīva* entangled in the material situation, averse to the Lord since time immemorial and absorbed in identification with matter it is the most perfect achievement possible and the most complete fulfilment of his *jīva*-hood. Henceforward it should be understood that whenever devotion is described as the natural function of the *jīva* or that his inherent nature is to be a devotee, then it is the nature and function of a *jīva* who has become favorable to the service of the Lord and has been gifted with *bhakti* that is being referred to. It is most essential that this be kept in mind.

That which is connected with the self is called *ātmīya* or self-related or relative. The self or *ātmā* is the "I" or ego and that which is connected with the self is that which we identify as "mine". Without any relations to anything outside of himself the *jīva* finds it intolerable to remain alone. The actual connections of the soul are all spiritual. Although it is the factual propensity of the *jīva* to associate with such spiritual existence the *jīvas* entrapped in material bondage are seen to be disposed to associating with matter which is of an entirely different nature. The cause for this is that he has forgotten his real identity under the spell of ignorance and is bound in identi-

fication to the material body and therefore his sense of possessiveness is applied to those things such as home and family which are connected to the body. This is the inevitable consequence of false identification with the body and can be called its poisonous fruit. The natural tendency of the fragmental or incomplete material substance is to seek fulfilment by connecting with the greater mass, thus when the *jīva* identifies with the body and due to ignorance thinks himself to be connected with the entirety of matter and then, for the pleasure of the body and senses he seeks heaps and heaps of material enjoyments. Because of the identification of the self with matter the *jīva* is forced to become the servant of illusion rather than the servant of Krishna. Due to that misconception of self, the heart of the *jīva* becomes polluted by ignorance and fills up with the desire for the pleasure of the senses of the body instead of for the satisfaction and pleasure of the senses of the Supreme Lord Krishna. Thus the *jīva*'s identification with the matter, which is the creation of ignorance, is the main cause for the presence of egocentric lust in the one who is the eternal servant of the Lord rather than *prem* or love for God; it is the main cause for his extrospection rather than introspection and thus it is the cause of his degradation and never of his upliftment.

The soul who is bondage to his material identity finds himself in a mixed condition of existence. He

himself as a fragmentary particle of consciousness is spiritual and the body and senses etc. are all material. Thus both spirit and matter are mixed in him. A flame encased in red glass will cause the appearance of red light, yet redness is the quality of the glass whereas light is the quality of the fire. The two separate qualities of two distinct substances, light and redness combine to become red light, so similarly the combination of the conscious entity in the material body, the body's quality of inclination to sense objects and the soul's quality of desires combine to become desire for sense gratification.

Although the living entity is engaged night and day in an effort to fulfil the desires of the fragmental or incomplete material body's desire for pleasure or satisfaction, he can never achieve success in that effort. For this there are mainly two reasons; namely material energy's insufficiency and the dissimilarity of the self and matter.

The non spiritual substance is dissimilar and antagonistic to the soul. Therefore the soul finds that sense-enjoyment or association with matter results in a feeling of deficiency and when associating with the like spiritual substance he becomes fulfilled and satisfied. This has been referred to in the *Śrūti*s by the words *śreyaḥ* and *preyaḥ*.

*"śreyaś ca preyaś ca manuṣyam eatas
tau samparitya vivinakti dhīraḥ"*

śreyo hi dhīro' bhipreyaso vṛṇite
preyo mando yoga-ksemad vṛṇite (Kāṭha. U. 1. 2. 2)

“Śreyah means the ultimate good and *preyah* means the immediate good. (directly translated *śreyah* means “better” or “auspicious” and *preyah* means “that which is pleasing”.) Both these things are always facing man. Those who are intelligent are able to distinguish between the two, they choose *śreyah* over *preyah* whereas those who are less intelligent choose *preyah* out of the desire to gain new kinds of facilities for sense enjoyment and the protection of previously accumulated resources.

The non-spiritual substance, matter, is incomplete and short-lived due to its fragmental nature. It is not eternal and complete like the spiritual substance. Another name for incompleteness and fragmentedness is insufficiency. The material body and senses do not find plenitude even after enjoying heaps and heaps of material sense objects because it is quite impossible for one imperfect and transient substance to be the cause of fulfilment of another similarly deficient substance. The bodily senses are momentarily gratified on contact with the material sense objects, but immediately afterwards the feeling of insufficiency again arises. Thus anyone who thinks carefully will be able to understand how the *jīva* will never be able to find any satisfaction even after passing many, many lifetimes in this illusory endeavour.

Without the experience of transcendental beatitude, without the experience of the “vast”, in no way it is possible for the *jīva* to satisfy his desire for unlimited happiness by contact of fleeting sense enjoyment—the “scanty”. Therefore the *Śruti* explains the nature of both the “vast” (*Bhūmā*) and the “scanty” (*alpa*) and advises the *jīva* to become detached from the latter and encourages him to search out the former.

*“yo vai bhūmā tat sukham nālpe sukham astir bhūmaiva
sukham*

*yatra nānyat paśyati nānyat śṛṇoti nānyot vijānāti sa
bhuma*

*atha yatrānyat paśyati anyat śṛṇoti anyat vijānāti tad
alpam.*

*yo vai bhūmā tad amṛtam atha yad alpam tan
martyam*

(*chāand.u. 7.23.24*)

That which is vast is happiness. There is no happiness in that which is scanty, the vast is happiness. What is this vastness? That which upon seeing leaves nothing else to be seen, which upon hearing leaves nothing more to be heard and which upon knowing leaves nothing more to be known is called the “vast”. And that thing which leaves one desiring for more to see, to hear or to know is called the “scanty”. That which is vast is immortal, but the “scanty” or the temporary titillation of the material senses is the mirage of this temporal existence.”

However much the *jīva* identifies himself with the material body and senses out of illusion, he will no more be able to factually become one with them any more than it is possible for oil to fully dissolve in water. Spirit and matter are inherently antagonistic to one another. One who mistakes a rope for a snake may become frightened or agitated as a result, but the rope remains a rope. In the same way, we may make the same type of mistake in thinking that the spirit self is a material substance, but despite this artificial application of material identification to the soul, the soul remains an eternal spiritual substance. The Supreme Lord personally says the same thing:

*“yathā sarva-gatam saukṣmyād ākaśam nopalipyate
sarvatrāvasthito dehe tathātmā nopalipyate (BG. 13.33)*

“Due to its subtle nature, the sky remains unaffected despite being spread everywhere, so similarly the soul is situated in the body but never mixes with it irrevocably. “

Factully, the soul is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss and eternally free and distinct from the material body. The sky may appear to be sullied by smoke and dust but it is actually untouched, so too one may identify himself with this dissimilar and antagonistic material nature, but in fact he is always untouched and free. Just as a bewildered parakeet remains inside his cage even after the door has been unlatched, so similarly the living being remains bewildered by

his false conception of self and sits in the cage of the body as if imprisoned. Hence, even though the living entity may think himself to be matter out of confusion, it should be known that he is an eternal particle of consciousness—the spiritual substance.

The *sat chit ānanda jīva* can only find satisfaction of his desires in the association of the spiritual nature which is similarly eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. even if he should consider the non-congenerous body to be himself, that which is factually untrue can never be made true. One can complete a golden earring with gold and an earthen jug with mud and can never finish the work on a golden earring with mud nor the earthen jug with gold, and in a similar way matter can be fulfilled only by matter, the consciousness can be fulfilled by the spiritual substance and the reverse will never be possible. For this reason, if one tries to satisfy the soul by pouring piles upon piles of material form flavor, sound, feeling and smell as fuel for the fire of the five senses, although these may be a momentary relaxation of their desires, the discontented soul's thirst will remain. Most probably the soul's dissatisfaction will increase due to the addition of more unfavorable materials to bury him. For example, if during the summer a baby is suffering due to the oppressive heat and its mother should cover it with more warm clothes due to being unable to understand the cause of its discomfort, then just as that child's discomfort increases so also the soul

wishes to enjoy complete beatitude and is anxious for that, but due to the influence of nescience he is unable to understand the cause of his own discomfort and he starts to collect masses of sense objects and piles them on to the already insufferable burden that he has to bear. As a result, his inexpressible suffering, far from being mitigated, is increased greatly. The inner complaint or discontent of the soul whose nature has thus been covered by the non-congenious and antagonistic material substance is constantly expressed in the form of desire. The scriptures also describe how the *jīva*'s fire of desire, rather than being extinguished by the addition of the fuel of the sense objects, becomes increased by them geometrically:

*“na jātu hāmaḥ kāmānām upobhogenā śāmyati
haviṣā kṛṣṇa-vartmaiva bhūya evābhivarbhatē”.*

(SB.9.19.14)

“Desires are never quietened by sense gratification, but rather, just as clarified butter when poured on the sacrificial fire causes its increase, so too the fire of material desire expands greatly when the fuel of sense gratification is added.”

If a medicine does not have the desired effect then it should be understood that there has been a mistake in the diagnosis of the disease. If one thinks the matter over carefully he will be able to see how the *jīva* is making mistakes in every direction in under-

standing what is his material disease and what it's correct treatment is.

If the following mistakes are made in the course of treating a patient then there is no possibility of a cure being effected: (1) treating one person for another's disease, (2) giving a medicine meant for another disease, (3) giving patient that which is the cause of the disease. The living entity makes exactly these same errors in his treatment of the "disease of material life." (1) For the disease of the soul he is treating the body and senses. (2) The living being thirsts for complete spiritual ecstasy and yet wants to quench it with the poison of the sense objects. (3) The suffering which is felt by the *jīva* is caused by his lack of contact with the congenious spiritual substance and yet he makes arrangements to give it more contact with non-congenious substance, namely the material sense objects.

Another name for the endless desires of the *jīva* bewildered by nescience is the disease of material existence (*bhāva-roga*). As a result of this disease, the *jīva*, who by nature is always full of bliss, has to be admitted in to the hospital of this material world where he is being treated. His condition is critical and as long as no change is made in the medication there is no possibility that the suffering and distorted soul's disease of desire can ever be cured nor that his unquenched thirst will ever be slaked.

An inherent quality of the spiritual substance is

bliss or happiness as much as an inherent quality of fire is heat, of musk is pleasing fragrance and of honey is sweet taste. There is no possibility of fire's existing without heat, nor of musk's existing without its pleasing fragrance, nor of honey without its sweetness. Similarly, the spiritual substance can never be without its intrinsic quality of bliss or happiness (*ānanda*). The existence of honey means its existence along with sweetness and similarly the existence of the spiritual substance means its external existence along with bliss. Where there is fire but no heat, musk and no fragrance or honey without sweetness that should be known as an illusion or non-existent paradox. In the same way, the conscious entity without happiness is a similar impossibility. Wherever the word *chinmoy* (conscious or spiritual) is used it should be understood as *chit-ānanda* or consciousness and bliss, which are, of course, both *sat* or eternal.

At this point the doubt may arise that if the *jīva* is a spiritual particle, a fleck of consciousness, so to speak, then it must be accepted that bliss is present within him. The relation of heat with fire and sweetness with honey is intrinsic and innate, such qualities don't have to be brought from outside and added. Similarly, when blissfulness is the natural quality of the living being then what is the cause of his apparent lack of happiness? And why does the conditioned soul in the world of *samsār* always have to look for the fulfilment of his desires for happiness from ma-

terial sense objects? The naturally blissful *jīva*'s scarcity of happiness is as meaningless as the poverty of the Goddess of Fortune, yet when it is observable everywhere that he is always absorbed in the effort to find happiness and avoid distress then it is certainly a matter of wonder what has caused such an impossible occurrence.

In answer it must be said that the living entity's bewilderment as to his own identity is the root cause. A millionaire lying in a golden bed is handsome, healthy and happy, yet even so, in his dreams he may experience himself to be dirty, diseased and depressed in his dream body. In that way also the spiritual particle or *jīva* is always blissful by nature, nevertheless the material nature, *Māyā*, illusion, is capable of making even the impossible occur. By her trickery the *jīva* forgets his actual identity and experiences all kinds of miseries due to thinking himself to be the body.

*“śoka-mohau sukhaṁ duḥkhaṁ dehāpattiś ca māyayā
svapno yathātmanah khyātih saṁsṛtir na to vāstavi”*
(SB.11.11.12)

“A dream is another condition of the intelligence in an altered state. *Māyā* similarly creates the illusory experiences of grief and bewilderment, distress and unhappiness, death etc. One should know that material existence which is symptomized by experiences is not actually real”.

The body, house, etc. of the living being are not completely illusory in all respects as is the case of those in a dream, but because of his false super imposition of self identification on the body and of possessiveness on the home and family etc. connected with the body, they have a dream-like unrealness to them. (*dehe ātma-buddhi ei bibarter sthān* ("cc")—Illusion means identification with the body—not the unreality of the entire creation.") Both the spiritual particle, the *jīva*, and the body, family etc. which are material are energies of the Lord, but even so they have mutually opposing natures. A snake and a rope are both real, yet to think that the rope is a snake is false and so too both the body and soul are real existing items, yet the concept that "I am this body" and the resultant appearance of distress and suffering is as unreal as a dream.

The nature of *chit* (spiritual energy) is to be blissful, but the material energy is void of such blissful nature. The materialism or identification with matter experienced by the *jīva* is the cause of his non-experience of his innate blissfulness. Just as the naturally effulgent spark appears dull when covered by clouds of smoke, so also the spiritual spark is covered by the smoke of matter, and the more he is veiled by that covering of matter's three qualities the more his inherent spirit of ecstasy becomes dulled. Glowing coals when covered by ash no longer seem to be in their natural state and thus and uncomfortable feel-

ing of want and incompleteness arises and the consequent effort to discard the covering and be established in its nature is made; similarly, when the non-spiritual qualities eclipse the soul, then a feeling of want and dissatisfaction arises in him and he seeks to rid himself of that covering and re-establish himself in his actual nature. This effort takes the form of the search for happiness and the effort to avoid suffering. The *jīva*'s experience of unhappiness is simply due to his actual identity being covered by material nature. Whatever insufficiency or lack is felt by the *jīva* results from his innate blissfulness being thus covered.

The natural blissfulness of the *jīva* is never mutated or destroyed. It is an eternal quality like the *jīva* himself. No matter how much the living being is covered by and identification with matter, that nature can never be changed or destroyed. The more one mixes water in a sweet solution, the more its sweetness becomes progressively diluted and ultimately appears to disappear; due to the coverings of matter the soul's inherent blissfulness appears to have completely vanished but factually it is never mutated or destroyed. When heat is applied to the aforementioned sugar solution and the water is boiled away, the sugar appears once again as before—its existence was never destroyed or lost, it only needed to be freed from its coverings. Similarly, as the *jīva* becomes gradually freed from the modes of material nature

and his natural qualities are fully revealed, when he is completely free from the clutches of ignorance, then it can be clearly understood that his innate blissfulness neither increases nor decreases, nor is it altered or destroyed but it simply took on an eternal substance—he is eternally blissful by nature. Mutation and dissolution are not the functions of that *jīva*, but are the functions of matter. He sees six changes always taking place in every material substance i.e. generation, growth, stasis, reproduction, deterioration and finally dissolution or death. Movement is the function of the floating boat and not of the trees lined on the riverbank, but being seen from the boat they appear to be moving; in the same way the six changes undergone by matter appear to be the changes of the soul, but this is only appearance. These changes are the workings of matter and not spirit—the *jīva*'s legacy of bliss remains neither increased, nor decreased, nor destroyed but eternally the same. A line of clouds passes across the moon and hence its rays appear alternately intense or infirm according to the density of the clouds, still we know that the moon itself and the actual intensity of its rays to be unchanged. In the same way the spiritual particle's blissfulness is an eternal and unchangeable quality which undergoes the appearance of change due to the changes undergone by material nature. The fish, born of the water, cannot remain without water even for a moment, and so too the *jīvas*, born of the Su-

premely blissful and conscious entity cannot live for even a moment without that blissfulness. Thus the *Śrutis* have said:

*“ānandād hy eva khalo imāni bhūtāni jāyante
ānandena jātāni jīvanti, ānandam prayanti
abhisamviśanti”*

(Taitt.U.3.6.1)

“All living beings are produced from bliss, after birth they maintain their existence due to bliss and at the time of destruction they merge again into that blissful existence”.

If the function of happiness were not eternally inherent in the *jīva*, then in some particularly unfavorable situation it would certainly be destroyed, but because he is innately blissful, no matter how much that quality is covered by the non-spiritual substance or the three qualities of nature he is never at any time completely without happiness. No matter how much he is submerged in the ocean of distress, no matter how much his feelings of insufficiency are increased, there will always be some message of happiness hidden there. Even the *jīva* who is completely bound up by the ropes of illusion, who is tormented by the pangs of intense grief in loss or disease, who after searching and searching is unable to find even the faintest trace of happiness in the deepest recesses of his heart, when even the slightest breeze of felicitousness doesn't seem to be anywhere available to cool

the steaming, poisonous fever of material suffering—even in such an aggravated condition the existence of bliss within the soul cannot be denied. Just as aquatic volcanos are possible even in the ocean's deepest trenches and the existence of water is possible in blazing fires, so too the *jīva* even though blanketed by nescience and the three qualities of material nature, and ever-increasingly oppressed by feelings of scarcity and want, it can still be observed that in the depths of his heart that form of his which is eternally embraced by bliss is still present.

One of the best examples of suffering in the material world is that of a mother whose newborn infant has died. When that mother's piteous cries pierce the very heart of others and the surrounding directions are burned to cinders by the fire of her grief as she falls to the ground like a tree in a typhoon, beating her breast in lamentation, still, even in that vast desert of distress a trace of happiness can be found like an oasis. The bereaved mother of our example is still feeling some happiness even while crying, beating her breast and falling to the ground—and it can be proved very easily. If someone should try to stop her from going through the above-described display of lamentation then it is seen that her suffering seems to increase even more. Therefore it has to be assumed that, in her expression of grief she must be experiencing some greater satisfaction by increasing it. Thus it can be seen that even in the most heightened in-

stances of bereavement the *jīva* experiences some kind of happiness.

Sometimes it is seen that due to great intensity of suffering some people express a desire to die, but when the possibility of death actually presents itself they give up that desire and make their utmost efforts to escape from its hands. For example, there was an old woman carrying a heavy load of wood. Being oppressed by the labor of carrying it, she cried out to the Lord of Death to take her away. When he actually came before her she immediately retracted her statement and asked him to help her lift the load back on her head. From this it can be understood that even in suffering so intense that one wants to die, still there is some happiness which at least is greater than the suffering which will be brought on by death, otherwise why would the effort be made by one to avoid death? Therefore it can be clearly concluded that some speck of happiness remains even in the most miserable situations experienced by the living being while under the influence of nescience.

Even in the extreme case where people take their own lives by drinking poison etc., even in such cases of suicide evidence of the eternality and blissfulness of the soul can be found. Due to ignorance the *jīva* may think himself to be the body, but that is actually the self's secondary feature, the primary feature being the consciousness itself. Due to the presence of the primary self in the body a sense of identity or

relationship is created for the secondary self. If the body's existence is seen is detrimental to the happiness of the primary self, then some people are able to even give that up. To preserve the life and happiness of the body one may be forced to amputate a limb bitten by a snake and similarly the people who give up their body voluntarily do so at the behest of pleasing the primary self whose existence is beyond that of the body. That self is by nature the eternal and blissful spiritual particle. That person who recognizes something to be the cause of suffering and hence rejects it is called a renouncer (*tyaktā*) and that which he rejects is called the object of renunciation (*tyājya*). One who renounces for the purpose of gaining pleasure will certainly give up the causes of misery thus these are the objects of renunciation, but he himself can be his own *tyājya* or thing that must be given up. Therefore, just like a person rids himself of burning garments to save his body from a fury blaze, so the suicide rids himself of his suffering body but from this we can surmise at the existence of a renouncer who has his existence beyond the body and at this living entity's innate blissfulness. The great philosopher Bhārati Tīrtha explains this matter very nicely in his well-known work, *Pañcadaśī*:

*“rogakrodhābhibhutānām mumūrsā viksyate kvacit
tato dveṣād bhavet tyājya ātmeti yadi tan na hi
tyaktuṃ योग्याया देहाया नātmatā tyaktur eva sā*

na tyaktary asti sa dvesyas tyājye dvesye tu ka kṣatīḥ”

(12.28-29)

Sometimes a person who is overwhelmed by anger or disease may be seen to develop a hatred for himself and desire to die (i.e. to give up such a hateful “self”). This however is not logical because the body can be the object of renunciation but how can one renounce himself? The renouncer never has hatred for himself but he hates the suffering body and other causes of his misery and what is the harm in hating such objects of renunciation?”

Looking at the question from every angle it is impossible to deny the eternity and blissfulness of the self. When we observe the increase and decrease of happiness in the living being it should be recognized as the result of relative changes in the covering of the non-spiritual or material substance over him. It is not really an increase or decrease of bliss.

Another name for the spiritual substance is the *ātmā* or *ātma-vastu*. The *jīva* is a particle of consciousness and therefore he is a spiritual substance or *ātma-vastu* also. The all-powerful *Paramātmā* is the indwelling Super-soul of the spiritual substance known as the *jīvātmā* who is His energy. Further, the most complete and perfect form of the Supersoul is Lord Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the root cause of all spiritual existences. Since ecstasy is the innate function of the spiritual substance, it

can be easily understood that Lord Krishna is the most complete form of such ecstasy. All of His expansions and the *Paramātmā* can be called more complete than the *jīva* who is simply a complete form of bliss. Anything which has been cut off or divided up can be called incomplete. The spiritual substance or *ātmavastu* can never be cut-off or divided-up and therefore it is complete. Thus the measure of the spiritual substance starts from the point of complete (*pūrṇa*) and ends with *purnatamā* or most complete. In the spiritual realm there is no measurement lower than perfect and complete.

Even though the *jīva* is a mere spark of consciousness, in terms of untainted blissfulness he is perfect and complete. The blissfulness of the *jīva* and that of Krishna are similarly complete but just as there is a difference between a full jug of water and the full ocean, so too such a difference exists in most respects between the individual and supreme souls. Those who are known as *ātmārāma* or self-satisfied can remain absorbed in the innate beatitude of the soul. Their self is completely freed from the coverings of non-self and thus they are complete in their natural quality of joyfulness and thus they are known as *ātmārāma*. Because they feel no shortage of joy they find it unnecessary to search for pleasure in things outside of themselves like other embodied or conditioned souls. They, although as a spiritual particles are mere fragments in size, they are completely satisfied with their

natural spiritual blissfulness and are therefore called *pūrṇa* or full. This is the main difference between a liberated and conditioned soul.

The *jīva* who is situated in his constitutional spiritual qualities can be called complete, but even that is not his most complete state. The highest achievement or state attainable by the *jīva* is to be a devotee or servant of Krishna. As long as the *jīva* is not able to surrender himself entirely to his supreme cause and shelter there is no possibility of his achieving his ultimate happiness or benefit. Although the spark once separated from its covering of smoke is naturally bright and pleasing, still it is even more effulgent and beneficial when it is reunited with its shelter and cause, the fire; similarly, the *jīva* who frees himself from the material condition, although liberated, in his independent state he is neither irrevocably free from any danger nor does he experience the same unlimited happiness that he does when he takes shelter of the desire tree of Govinda (Lord Krishna) Who is the ultimate cause of all causes. Giving up all his independence to Him, he finds the highest ecstasy and fearlessness. A woman may be shackled in chains of iron in some country far from home; if she is released from that bondage, still, until she is able to take shelter of her own husband and bind herself to him out of her own will she is not free from anxiety or danger, no matter how elated she may be at having attained freedom. In much the same way, the *jīva*

who is freed from the bondage of material life, although finding the pleasure of his spiritual nature, cannot consider himself to be completely safe and satisfied until he can immolate himself completely and voluntarily at the lotus feet of the life of his life, the dearmost object of love for all living beings, Lord Sri Krishna. Furthermore, just as the women of our example finds the shelter of her husband to be hundreds of times more beneficial than any amount of independence and service to him be hundreds of times more exhilarating than the attainment of freedom from bondage, so too the *jīvas* who takes shelter of Krishna finds that to belittle the glory of millions of freedoms and the pleasure of service to Him to make billions of *brahmānandas* or *ātmānandas* to appear faulty. Thus Sanaka and other *ātmārāmas*, even though absorbed in the happiness of *brahmānanda* or impersonal spiritual beauty, they were later attracted to the form of Krishna and this prior attachment was broken. They became interested in His lotus feet exclusively. And not that they were attracted by directly seeing His personal form, they simply caught the aroma from the tulasi leaves offered to His feet and the bees of their minds were attracted and flew to them. What a powerful influence He has to be able to attract even such *ātmārāma*!

*“tasyāravinda-nayanasya padāravinda-kiñjalka-miśra-
tulasī-makaranda-vāyuh,*

antargataḥ sva-vivareṇa cakāra teṣāṃ

sañkṣobham akṣara-jusam api citta-tanvoh.”

(SB.3.15.43)

“When Sanaka and the other sages, his brothers, all of whom were liberated personalities or *ātmārāmas*, bowed down to the feet of the Lord, breeze carried the fragrance of tulasi leaves which were decorating them. When that beautiful aroma entered their nostrils their minds became thrilled and the hairs on their bodies stood on end—even though they were completely self-fulfilled”

In the *Chaitanya Charitāmrita*, whose every verse has its basis in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, the same thing is mentioned:

*“iha sob rohu, krishna charaṇ sambandhe
ātmārāmer mon hare tulasīr gandhe”*

(CC Madhya 17.133)

“What to speak of Krishna’s other qualities and those of His lotus feet, simply the fragrance of the tulasi leaves offered there was enough to capture the minds of the *ātmārāmas*.”

The ultimate state of ecstasy is Sri Krishna. All the unlimited streams of pleasure have their source in Him. He is not only the most complete form of ecstasy, but being the cause of all other ecstasies also. He is the lord of all spiritual moods or varieties of enjoyment which are called *rasa*. Ecstasy develops out of *rasa* (taste), and therefore *rasa* is the cause and ecstasy is the effect. *Rasa* has form whereas ecstasy is

a formless substance. Just as a pleasing fragrance emanates from a scented joss stick, so similiary ecstasy (*ānanda*) arises from the different varieties of spiritual enjoyment which are known as *rasas*. Thus these *rasas* or modes of transcendental loving exchange are the foundation or resting ground of *ānanda*, or spiritual ecstasy. Because He is the cause of all ecstasies and moods of spiritual enjoyment, Lord Krishna is also known as *Rasarāj* (the king of *rasa*). Thus He is also the abode or foundation of the impersonal form of bliss known as *Brahman**

The Lord states this Himself in the Bhagavad-gīta, "*brahmāno hi pratiṣṭhāham*". ("I am the basis of the impersonal brahman. I am this brahman's personal form." (BG.14.27). The impersonal or formless effulgence of the sun emanates from the sun-globe which has form. The sun globe is possessed of varieties whereas its effulgence does not. Similarly, that which the Śrutis have described as "*ānanda-brahma*" ("*ānanda-brahmeti vyajānāt*" —Taitt.U.3.6."He understood that bliss is the supreme, that *ānanda* is *Brahman*"), the non-fragmental or undivided ecstatic truth, which has no qualities or distinguishing fea-

This Brahma is not the same as the creative deity, Brahma. The etymology of the word is given in Sruti, "*brhat brmhayateti brahma*." That which is itself great and makes others great also is known as brahma. Therefore brahma is the name generally given in the Vedic literature, especially the Srutis to the Supreme absolute truth. It again is divided into a personal and impersonal aspect.

tures, is simply the bodily effulgence of the Supreme Lord Krishna, Who is the embodiment of eternity, cognizance and bliss.

*“yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-aṇḍa-koṭi-
koteṣu aśesa-vasudhādi-vibhūti-bhinnam
tad brahma-niskalam-anantam-aśesa-bhūtam
govindam ādi-purusam tam ahaṁ bhajāmi.”*

(B.S.5.40)

“I worship the original personality, Govinda (Krishna), Whose bodily effulgence is the unlimited, undivided, impersonal Brahman which is the resting place of unlimited universes.”

Just as the sun’s effulgence can be called its glory, and as the fragrance of the incense stick can be called its glory, so too one of the glories of the Supreme Lord Krishna, Who is the embodiment of *rasa*, is His impersonal expansion of ecstasy, *ananda-brahma* “*madīyam mahīmānaṁ ca paraṁ brahmeti sabditam*” (SB 8.24.28) “My glory is known as *param brahma*. “Therefore *ānanda-brahma* can be called the glory of *rasa-brahma*, or Krishna’s glory. We can understand from the statements of the Lord Himself in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam that this impersonal *Brahma* is one of His potencies.

So we have come to understand that the root or cause of all ecstasy is *rasa*, which loosely translated means flavor or taste. Ecstasy depends or is based on *rasa*. Therefore, the ultimately perfect position or

cause of ecstasy can be called the supreme embodiment of all such *rasas* or *Rasarāj*. Lord Sri Krishna, *Rasarāj*, is the cause of spiritual beatitude known as *brahmānanda*. He is the cause of the happiness of the living beings, of the universe—in short, He is the ultimate resting place of all varieties of happiness. Lord Krishna's form is the source of all *rasa*, therefore all different streams of ecstasy flow from Him. The *Śrutis* say:

“*yad vai tat sukṛtam. raso vai saḥ. rasam hy evāyaṁ labdhvānandi bhavati.*” (Taitt.U.2.7.1)

“He Himself is the doer, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the embodiment of all transcendental mellows (*rasas*). The living being who can relish these mellows is sure to be supremely joyful.”

Lord Krishna is like the ambrosia-rayed moon which causes the ocean to be agitated for. He intoxicates the entire universe by a mere drop of His potency and causes the agitation of his glory, the ocean or *brahmānanda*. He is the fountain-head of all ecstasy and sweetness; He is the Lord of *rasas*, *Rasarāj*. Lord Krishna is said to be the attractor of everyone, not just the *ātmārāmas*. All living beings, moving or non-moving, male and female and even He Himself are attracted to His unrivalled ambrosial sweetness.

“*krishner mādhurjyer ek aśwābhabik bol,*
krishṇa ādi noro-nārī koroye chonchol.” (CC Ādi 4.124)

“The natural potency of Krishna’s sweetness is that it disturbs every living being beginning from Krishna Himself.”

For the *jīva* there is no possibility of attaining happiness or contentment until he takes full shelter of the fearless lotus feet of the Rasarāj, Lord Krishna, Who is His cause and only refuge.

In the material world it is observed that the purpose of all activities is the attainment of happiness and the avoidance of distress. If the *jīva* becomes liberated from material bondage and if the covering of the material modes or non-spiritual substance is withdrawn, then the secondary result of mitigating the distressful condition is accomplished. Even so, however, the main goal of attaining happiness will never be fulfilled perfectly until he gives up the endeavour to find his own personal happiness and simply dedicates himself to the service of the cause of all causes, the embodiment of all ecstasies, Lord Sri Krishna. By watering the root of a tree it becomes unnecessary separately water the tree’s branches and twigs; similarly, if one can attain the happiness of serving Krishna, the cause of all spiritual existence, then there is no need of seeking out any kind of personal happiness separately. By the attainment of service to Krishna, the subordinate or corollary purpose of avoiding distress is automatically achieved along with the complete and primary result of attaining supreme blissfulness. The only way to attain this service to

Krishna is by unspotted devotion to Him. “*bhaktyāham ekayā grāhya*” (S.B 11.14.20) “I can be captured only by *bhakti* (devotion).”—this is the Lord’s personal statement. Therefore to simply become a pure soul is not the highest perfection of the *jīva*—his most complete and perfect self-expression is in becoming a devotee of Lord Krishna. To be liberated from bondage in different stationary or locomotive material bodies and attain to pure *jīva*-hood is a decided improvement, but it is not the highest level of evolution which is attainable by the *jīva*. The actual nature or *swarūp* of the pure *jīva* is to be a devotee and devotion to the personification of *saṭ*, *chit*, *ānanda*, eternity, cognizance and bliss, the supreme cause of all causes and shelter of the universe, Sri Krishna, is the ultimate and actual function of the *jīva*.

The *jīva* who is bewildered about his own nature identifies with the body since time immemorial. His real duty or function is also to serve Sri Krishna, but being covered by the non-spiritual body and senses, he becomes filled with aversion for such service. Because of his impure intelligence he ends up serving illusory sense objects instead of Krishna. The false conception of self makes the eternal servant of Krishna play the part of a servant of illusion. Therefore, the revered author of *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita* has expressed the point as follows:

“*jīber swarūp krishna dās abhimān,
dehe ātma-gnāne ācchādito sei jñāna*”

"The ego of being a servant of God, Krishna, is the natural function of the living being, but being covered by the bodily conception of self he does not know it." (*C.C Madhya* 24.130)

II THE GOAL OF LIFE

(*Prayojana-prakaran*)

The simplest meaning of *bhakti* is love. Happiness or bliss is love and is the natural function of the *jiva*. That which is the cause of happiness or from which we get pleasure is the thing which is dear to us. We don't love or like the things which is not the cause of happiness and we do love the things that give us pleasure. All beings love happiness, therefore the causes of happiness are dear to them. The desire to enjoy causes one to love the causes of happiness. The *jiva* loves nothing and no one other than pleasure, therefore, wherever we see the symptoms of love or affection we should know that at the root of it there is necessarily a relation based on the giving of pleasure.

Those things which we think are dear to us—our wife, son, husband, daughter, relatives, wealth, jewels, money, fame, power, etc. are not actually dear at all. No one loves any of these things. What we actually love is the pleasure which we derive from them.

The appearance or feeling or love we think we have for all the abovementioned items is not in actual fact for them but for the happiness which we get from them. The love we have for wife and family is not actually for them, but they are dear to us because we get happiness from them; in actual fact we love the pleasure and not them. In the same way, the dear-ness of husband, daughter, relatives, wealth, money, jewels, etc. is not actually due to love for those objects. We get pleasure from all these things and therefore because we love happiness and are obliged for that happiness all those things seem dear to us. Because people love milk cows are dear to them; because sugar juice is loved by the people in general they have some feeling for the sugar cane plant; yet again, the milk and sugar juice themselves are dear because they are pleasing. The dear thing is the pleasure, I like milk because I get pleasure from it and because they are related to my search for happiness, I love the cows; because I love the cows I also have feeling for the persons who take care of the cows, and so on. On the other hand, for someone who doesn't like milk, milk is not the cause of any pleasure to him and consequently the cows and dairy farmers are also meaningless to him. The ultimate goal of all endeavour is simply happiness or pleasure. Wife, family and all other things are not the pleasure or happiness in themselves but are only the means for attaining it. They are dear to one another simply be-

cause there exists a mutual relation of pleasure giving and taking.

Just as milk and the cow are not one and the same thing, so too the objects of happiness and happiness itself are not identical—they are separate and distinct. If one says, "cow-milk, his intention is not that a cow is milk, but the purpose of the statement is "the milk of a cow" or "that milk which is obtained from a cow," similarly, when we speak of sense-happiness, we don't mean that the senses or sense objects are themselves happiness. The sensible meaning of the phrase is "the happiness which is derived from the senses and sense objects." That which we get from the object of happiness is called pleasure and the things upon which our pleasure depends are called the objects of happiness. We can say that happiness can be called pleasure and that which gives happiness is pleasure giving. When happiness and the object of happiness are two separate and distinct things then we should know that the meanings of the words "pleasure" and "pleasure giving" are also distinct. Furthermore, when happiness is the thing which is actually dear, and only due to having a relationship with our happiness that other things become dear, then we should know that the happiness is the actual dear thing and the other things are "endearing" or the causes of dearness. Just as "pleasure" and "pleasure-giving" are distinct terms, so too the words "dear" and "endearing" refer to two entirely different things. In other words, happiness

alone is dear, whereas those things which are pleasure-giving are not dear in themselves but are endearing because they are the means for attaining happiness.

Because we are not aware of what happiness in reality is, we think that the objects or happiness or the means for obtaining it are actually happiness and therefore we think them to be dear as well. Factually, although at present we may consider them to be pleasure-giving or endearing, they are neither the happiness itself nor are they actually dear. The only object of the *jīva*'s loving propensity is the happiness itself.

That which is *chinmoy*, the spiritual substance, that is actually blissful. The spiritual substance's nature or inherent quality is that is eternal, conscious and blissful. That which is not the self or spirit has no consciousness, is temporary and is void of blissfulness. The spiritual substance is consciousness; consciousness is ecstasy and ecstasy is consciousness or the spiritual substance. Therefore, without a connection with the spiritual (*chinmoy*) substance, the symptoms of bliss or happiness are nowhere to be observed. Wherever there are symptoms of happiness, it must be accepted that the presence of the spiritual substance can also be observed there. We should remember that without the soul there can be no happiness and without happiness there is no question of dearness or love. That which is itself ecstasy is the consciousness and the quality of dearness is present

in that. Wherever one finds dearness there he will also find consciousness and bliss. These three things, consciousness, happiness and love have an eternal and inseverable relation.

The soul, which is pure cognizance, is by a particular function of its own simultaneuosly both the knower and the object of knowledge. Similarly it is also bliss and through its own workings is also simultaneously the object of bliss and the enjoyer of it. In its own pleasure the pleasure is pleased, and because pleasure is the only thing which is dear, that pleasure or bliss loves its own pleasure or happiness. i.e.it loves itself. In other words, that which is happiness itself, the soul, is by a special function or ability it possesses becomes happy that it is happy and thus loves its own happiness. Therefore He Who is the root of all consciousness and bliss, the Supreme Energetic Lord, is Himself the embodiment or the highest perfection of beatitude and, by a special function or energy known as *hlādinī*, He Himself experiences that beatitude and by that same potency He is Himself the object of His own love and thus loves Himself. In other words, the supreme ecstasy (*paramānanda*) is Himself the Supreme Enjoyer of that ecstasy and that energy by which He acts as the supreme enjoyer is called the *hlādinī-śakti* or pleasure-giving potency. This pontency is described in the scriptures as follows:

“hlādātmāpi yayā hlādate hlādayati cā sā hlādinī”

(Siddhānta Ratnaḥ 1.45)

“The Supreme Lord is the embodiment of bliss and yet by His special personal potency known as *hlādinī* He Himself experiences that bliss and also makes the living beings ecstatic by giving them His association.”

*“sukha rūp kṛiṣṇa kore sukhāswādon,
bhakta goṇe sukh dite hlādinī kāroṇ.”*

(C.C. Madhya 2.8)

“Krishna is the form of happiness yet He relishes that happiness and gives happiness to the *jīvas* by means of His *hlādinī* potency.”

Since happiness is the only object of love, the Supreme Lord Who is the embodiment of bliss, enjoys Himself through His pleasure potency and by that potency He loves Himself. Devotion is the essential feature of that pleasure potency and because ecstasy only exists in that which is dear, the Supreme Lord's only pleasure is in this special feature of His pleasure potency or *hlādinī-śakti*, which is its essence and is known as *bhakti*. Because *bhakti* or devotion is naturally accompanied by the devotees, they are also objects of the Lord's enjoyment and are dear to Him. The Lord's affection for His devotee's, devotion and His pleasure potency are all just different forms of His affection for His own pleasure or His own self.

Therefore the only thing needed for love is happiness or bliss and other than such *ānanda*, nothing is actually dear.

The Supreme Lord is the complete whole and the master of all energies. He is the ultimate essence of all spiritual entity and He is the Supersoul or *Paramātmā* of all things. He is the primal cause of all ecstasies and He is their final resting place. The Supreme Lord is the unlimited cognizant and blissful entity. The *jīva* is His energy and is the atomic form of cognizance and bliss. The nature and qualities of the whole appear to some extent in its parts and those of the infinite in the infinitesimal. Therefore the qualities of the complete whole Supreme Lord also appear in atomic measure within the *jīva*. For that reason, the *jīva* is innately spiritual and blissful like the Supreme and like Him, by a special characteristic of his nature, he is also his own object of pleasure, is happy at his own happiness and loves his own blissful self. The *jīva* loves nothing, material or spiritual, outside of his own self which is blissful and thus most dear. Therefore, this much is sure at least that anything outside of the soul, such as the material body, house, wife and children etc. can never actually be the causes of our happiness and hence it is not logical to call anything outside of the self dear or pleasing.

At this point the doubt may arise that we seem to be getting delight from so many material objects,

things other than ourselves perhaps we cannot call them happiness itself or pleasure itself, but as the objects of happiness, why can't they be called pleasing or endearing? Just as opium, although not sleep itself, is certainly a sedative and therefore may reasonably be called "a cause of sleep", so too, many material things are seen to induce happiness even though they are not happiness in themselves. What, then, is the reason for saying these things are not pleasure giving or endearing?

In answer to this it must be pointed out that although opium is not sleep, it still has an innate sadative quality and hence it is not unreasonable to call it the cause of sleep. Similarly, a tree is not fruit, but fruits are an energy or expansion of the tree's own potency and therefore it is reasonable to call the tree the cause of the fruit. On the other hand, the pleasure which experience coming from any non-self object is not due to any quality inherent in that object itself. Therefore, to call any non-egoistic object the cause of happiness or pleasure is not justifiable. If pleasure were an inherent potency of the sense objects in the way that fruit is of a tree then it would certainly be no fault to call them pleasure giving or the causes of happiness, but because bliss or happiness is not a quality of matter it cannot be pleasure giving or endearing either is a quality of the spiritual substance only.

The self is of itself bliss and thus it is also the cause

of bliss. Therefore it is dear also and, being dear, it is the cause of dearness also. In other words that which is simultaneously itself happiness and the cause of happiness; both dear and endearing is the spiritual substance. It can therefore be understood that because the non-spiritual substance, matter, cannot be self-blissful by nature it can never be either dear or endearing.

The *jīva* is a particle of spiritual energy or spiritual substance and is therefore also called *jīvātmā*. He is not a product of matter like the body. Because dull matter is not blissful or dear by nature it is called non-spiritual or the non-ego. Because we are uninformed of a spiritual soul existing beyond the body, we take the non-self or non-egoistic body to be the self or "I". Similarly, the wife, husband, children, etc. have no relation to the soul which is transcendental to the body, yet because we think they have a relation to the self we call them "my" relatives and consider them to be the cause of our happiness and objects of our love. This is *Māyā*'s cruel joke on the self-bewildered living beings. The quality of blissfulness cannot exist in any non-spiritual substance, therefore it can be neither the object of love, nor can it possess such qualities as would make it lovable. Happiness or blissfulness is the innate quality of the spiritual substance only, thus the soul can at once be happiness and the cause of happiness and similarly, because happiness is dear, the blissful soul is simultaneously

dear and endearing (the cause of its dearness).

The *jīva* is the spiritual substance and therefore he is blissful. The blissful nature of the *jīva* is so potent that if any material or non-spiritual item should become linked with the soul or should the spiritual qualities be superimposed on it, then due to the spiritual substance's "shadow" falling on it, it also takes on the appearance of being pleasure-giving and endearing. When certain symptoms or attributes are not found in a certain item, then the unnatural addition of that nature and qualities can be called superimposition or ascription. For example when ascribing a fault to someone who actually is faultless, that is a false or unnatural addition of that fault, i.e. a false accusation. Similarly, due to ignorance we think the non-egoistic material energy, in which there is no blissful nature, to be "I" and "mine", in other words, the egoistic conceptions of "I" and "mine" are being ascribed to or superimposed on matter and to thus think of them as being the objects of happiness and love due to their connection with the blissfulness of the soul is called ascribing the egoistic conception to the non-ego. The influence of the blissfulness and dearness of the soul are so great that even where there is such a false ascription or superimposition of spiritual qualities to that which is not spiritual, the blissful soul's connection causes it to become the source of happiness and love.

The reflection of the sun's rays on water bounced

onto a wall or other non-luminous surface appears as ripples of light; similarly, the spiritual qualities are reflected onto the body, but even if another material or non-blissful substance comes into contact with it then it is also experienced as being pleasing or endearing. Factually, happiness and dearness are not qualities which exist in matter. First there is an identification of the self with the material body due to the presence of the soul there. This body is then like a secondary-self or reflected-self which when brought into contact with other things makes them also appear to be pleasing or the causes of happiness. Just as a dog chews a dry bone again and again, even though it has no blood or juice in it—the blood from his own gums and saliva of his own tongue moisten and flavor the bone to make him think that they are the properties of the bone itself, so also the non-self is inherently devoid of happiness and not dear, still because the nature of the soul has been ascribed or superimposed on it, or we could say flavoured and moistened with its happiness and dearness, then it appears to be something which gives pleasure and is endearing.

If one thinks a little carefully, he will be able to understand how no material object can be pleasing or happiness giving until a relationship is established with the soul and or the properties of the soul have been superimposed on it. The primary self is superimposed on the body and thus it seems that the 'self'

or 'I' is the body, and again, when another item gets the reflection of that secondary-self or body-self then it is thought of as being a "relative" or having a relation to the self and thus it becomes an object of love and happiness almost like the soul itself. The self-nature we call "I" and those things connected to self or related-nature we call "mine". Without identifying something as "mine" it can never become an object of happiness and love. Furthermore, to the degree that we identify something as "mine" that is the extent to which it is dear. If one adds honey to something which is ordinarily tasteless, that thing will also become sweet; similarly, if one applies the sense of "mine" to anything, i.e. establishes a concept of relationship, then that thing will also become an object of delight and affection. Without seeing such a relation to the self no non-egoistic substance can possibly seem sweet or pleasing and endearing. For this reason whatever is "mine" is consequently sweet and dear whereas that which is not "mine" does not seem sweet and as a result is not dear either. Nothing, be it husband, wife, homeland, kinsmen, food or recreation can be called dear until a relation or sense of possession on "myness" is ascribed to them which in actual fact have no relation to the self.

If happiness or dearness were inherent properties of wives, sons, wealth and property or food and recreation in the way that honey has sweetness inherent in it, then those things would remain dear to every-

one at all times. In actual fact, however, we see that when someone develops a sense of connection something, then for only as long as that idea remains and for that person only can a feeling of affection remain for that object only. Thus it should be easy to understand that the property of dearness does not exist in material things of itself. All mothers love their own sons because they are bound to them by a sense of relationship that this is "my" son. Similarly, fathers, sons, brothers, sisters, etc. are all dear or the object of affection inasmuch as there is a feeling of relationship to them. If the sons, etc. were actually dear in themselves, then any son would be dear to any mother, but in fact we see that no mother has the same affection for a son other than the one who is bound to them by a sense of possession or identification as "my son". Furthermore, if the affection a mother has for her son was due to a quality inherent in the son himself, then such love would be observable at all times in all circumstances. The fragrance of musk is its natural or inherent property, hence it always gives off a pleasing odor—in darkness or in light, in any situation without exception. On the other hand, if a mother should take her own son on her lap in dark room, if for some reason the erroneous conception should enter her mind that it is actually the son of a co-wife, then because the sense of relation or possessiveness has been cut, she immediately puts him down. In the same way, if the reverse situa-

tion should occur, a child's step-mother will be seen to take him to her breast in great affection. It is thus a matter worthy of contemplation to what extent ignorance deceives us into thinking that the giving of happiness or being dear are properties of our sons and wives and not of something arising from the soul itself. In those cases where a step-mother voluntarily takes care of the children of a co-wife it should be understood that her affectionate ministry to them will be proportionate to the amount of "my"ness that has awakened in her for them. In the same way, wealth, crops, house etc. will be the sources of pleasure of affectionate feeling only to the degree that a sense of relatedness or possession occurs. If wealth and possessions etc. were dear and pleasing in their own right, then those things which one himself did not possess but were owned by others would be equally the causes of pleasure and endearment. That wealth of which we are possessed and love as much as life itself (thinking it to be the cause of our happiness), as soon as it has been spent or given away then it no longer gives any sense of happiness or distress to us even when we hear of its increase or decrease in others' hands. That wealth which is in our possession, no matter how dear it seems to someone, as soon as the sense of proprietorship of my-ness is cut off then it is no longer dear to him. That thing which we spent sleepless nights thinking of, as soon as it passes into another's hands we become completely indifferent to its well-being.

On the other hand, when one gains the money spent by another, then he passes the night in wakefulness to guard it—due to the addition of the sense of possession it has now become the object of happiness and affection. If the qualities of being pleasure-giving or endearing were innate properties of the money itself then it would appear that way to everyone in all circumstances, but that is not the case. Any non-egoistic substance is dear as soon as there is a sense of possession imposed on it and is no longer dear when that sense is lifted. Thus, wherever a relation is created with the self, or even where there is just a reflection of such a relationship, there the innate qualities of the self are superimposed and the object of possessiveness becomes pleasing due to the soul itself's innate blissfulness and endearing due to soul's natural condition of being full of love.

One should take it as a definite fact that any wealth, property, offspring, etc. which are not one's own, or even the simple sense objects of sound, touch, form, taste and odour which are favorable, if they appear pleasing or dear it is based somehow or another on this idea of relationship or possessiveness. Even though an animal does not think of the sense object that "this is me" or "this is mine", he has another type of sense of ownership. He will think, "This is the object of my sense of hearing; this is the object of my sense of touch. This thing is the object of my sense of smell; this is the object of my sense of sight; this is

the object of my sense of taste." Due to this type of spontaneous possessiveness, those different sense objects are dear to those particular living beings because of a sense of favorableness. On the other hand, wherever there is no such appearance of dearness in the sense objects it is to be understood that those sense objects are unfavorable to the particular creature. A man thinks, "I am a man and therefore this thing is suitable for my enjoyment. " Due to his having a sense of being a man he has a sense of certain things being his to enjoy due to his humanity and thus those things are pleasing to him whereas those very same things are not pleasing or dear to species of life other than man. This is because they do not have the same congenital sense of possessiveness for them. Again, those things which are the instinctive objects of this type of possessiveness for species other than man and will thus seem very relishable to them will seem loathsome to the human who has no such inner sense. Because of the existence or non-existence of such a general sense of possessiveness, the sound of a flute can be pleasing or attractive to a snake or a deer and cause them to run toward it whereas the wolves and jackals and other species of animals will all flee at the same sound; most birds will be exhilarated at the sight of dawn, but owl will go off to hide; men will be enthused by the fragrant smoke of burning incense but the mosquitoes will be most discomfited. This type of sense of relationship or "my-ness" is the reason

why any sense object is dear to any creature. Therefore, nothing is pleasurable other than the spiritual substance and nothing else is factually dear.

Just as the reflection of the sun on the water's surface will be seen as either still or tremulant according to the water's waviness, so too the body undergoes changes, as a result of which certain things are experienced as either favorable or unfavorable and hence as the causes of delight or suffering. Because of this we work for the favorable conditions of the body such as health etc. and try to avoid disease and other unfavorable situations. Actually, though, we are not working for the pleasure of the body—it is because of the self within whom we love whose distress or lack of happiness we want to terminate. Then again, all those things which have a connection with the body which has somehow become connected with the spiritual substance, all those things for which a sense of possessiveness has awakened, all those things like wife, wealth and possessions that we love—it is not for their affection that we love them, but the actual object of our love is the self, the dearest soul. If the soul itself were not dear and pleasing, then nothing would be the object of happiness or love to anyone. All things become dear when a relation is established with the self and become useful for the satisfaction and pleasure of the self. We are all recalcitrant *jīvas*, bewildered by the illusory potency of the Lord, *Maya*, and our mother, the *Śruti*, have

indicated to us to look inward to find the root of love and happiness.

“sa hovāca—na vā are patyuh kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavatyātmanas tu kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati. na vā are jāyāyāḥ kāmāya jāyā priyā bhavati ātmanas tu kāyāma jāyā priyā bhavati; na vā are putrānām kāmāya putrāḥ priyā bhavanti ātmanas tu kāmāya putrāḥ priyā bhavanti; na vā are vittasya kāmāya vittam priyam bhavatyātmanas tu kāmāya vittam priyam bhavati; na vā are brahmanah kāyāma brahma priyam bhavatyātmanas tu kāmāya brahma priyam bhavati; na vā are ksatrasya kāmāya kṣatram priyam bhavatyātmanas tu kāmāya kṣatram priyam bhavati; na vā are lokānām kāmāya lokāḥ priyā bhavanti ātmanas tu kāmāya lokāḥ priyā bhavanti; na vā are devānām kāmāya devāḥ priyā bhavanti ātmanas tu kāmāya devāḥ priyā bhavanti; na vā are bhūtānām kāmāya bhūtāni priyāni bhavanti ātmanas tu kāmāya bhūtāni priyāni bhavanti; na vā are sarvasya kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavatyātmanas tu kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati ātmā vā are drastavyaḥ śrotavyaḥ mantavyo nididhyāsitavyo maitreyī ātmano vā are darśanena śravanena matyā vijñenedam sarvam viditam.

(Bṛihad Aranyaka.U.2.4.5; 4.5.6)

“Yājñavalkya said,” Oh Maitreyī, a wife does not love her husband for his pleasure but she loves him for herself and similarly the husband does not love his wife for her pleasure but for the pleasure of the self.

The father does not love his sons for their pleasure but he loves them for the pleasure of the self. One does not love his wealth for the sake of his wealth's pleasure, but he loves his wealth for the sake of the self's pleasure. One does not love the brahmin for the sake of the brahmin's pleasure, but one loves him for the pleasure of the self; one does not love the king for the sake of the king's pleasure, one loves the king for the pleasure of the self; one does not love people for the sake of the people's pleasure, one loves the people for the sake of the self's pleasure; one does not love the demigods for the pleasure of the God, he loves the Gods for the pleasure of the self; one does not love the living beings in general for their pleasure, he loves them for the pleasure of the self; one does not love anything for its pleasure, he loves everything for the pleasure of his own self. Therefore, one should hear from the sages, spiritual masters and scriptures about how to directly realize this self, then thinking over carefully what you have heard with reason what you have heard, absorb yourself in meditation on the conclusions of your reasoning. By hearing, contemplation, and absorption in meditation one can gain direct experience of the self, or soul, and by such direct contact with the self he will know everything."

The musk deer in the forest becomes crazed by his own smell; bewildered and disturbed, he is unable to understand anything. He runs from tree to

tree, creeper to creeper, sniffing at everything, but he does not know that the fragrance which he smells everywhere is not the property of the forest greenery, but is perceived in them due to his own touch—the fragrance is coming from the musk within his own navel. Similarly, the body, house, homeland, kinsmen, wife and children are all the non-self, nevertheless due to the slightest contact of the “fragrance” of happiness and love coming from the blissful and endearing soul they, too become pleasing and endearing. The *jīva* bewildered by nescience is unable to understand that the fragrance of happiness which is disturbing all the living beings and causing them endless anxiety is not the innate property of any of those external things, but that happiness and dearness of all things are the qualities of the self within the body, the spiritual substance.

· That which is happiness is dear; that is the object of love; whatever is dear and the object of love is happiness. Dearness and happiness are mutually interdependent. The word happiness indicates the existence of something dear along with that happiness and the word dear implies the existence of happiness along with that dearness. Therefore, we have understood that there is nothing dear other than the innately blissful spiritual substance or self.

Although the *jīvātmā* is the self or spiritual substance, the root of all spiritual existence and controller of all energies is his shelter, the Supreme Self or

Paramātmā. Just as the branches and twigs of a tree have no existence without the root, so there is no possibility of an individual soul existing without the Supersoul, *Paramātmā*. Just as the rays of effulgence coming out of a fire get their power to illuminate from the fire, so too the qualities or happiness and dearness that are manifested by the *jīva* arise from the Supreme Soul's qualities of blissfulness and dearness, and from the reflections and shadows of the reflections of His qualities all the non-spiritual, non-egoistic things of this world also become the objects of our affection and search for happiness. The completely independent Supreme Lord is Krishna. Who is therefore the ultimate conception of the Supersoul. By connection with the soul or by the reflection of such a connection the non-egoistic things such as the body, home etc. all become dear, but the *jīva* himself becomes dear due to the dearness or love of the Supreme Lord Krishna Who is the penultimate feature of the supreme spiritual substance or Godhead. Hence, the living entity himself is not the root cause of the dearness of all things, but its main source is Krishna Who is the fountainhead of all existences. There is nothing in existence more dear than Krishna Who is the embodiment of all ecstatic flavors and loving sweetness, from Whose love and sweetness the entire universe has become dear and pleasing. The Srutis, indicating that supreme cause of all dearness, say:

"lād etat priyaḥ, preyo vittāt, preyo"

nyasmāt sarvaśmād antaratarm

yad agam ātmā....(Bṛihad Araṇyak U 1.4.8)

"The supersoul is situated in the in most depth of the self; He is therefore more dear than ones own son, more dear than one's own wealth. He is dearer than any other thing. He is the dearest" The Śmṛiti also says."

*"prāṇa-buddhi-manaḥ-svātmā-dārāpatya-dhanādayaḥ
yat samparkāt priyā āśaṁ tataḥ ko nyaḥ paraḥ priyaḥ"*

(S.B 10.23.27)

"Who can be more dear than Him, by Whose relationship to the life, intelligence, mind, self, wife, sons, wealth, etc. has made them all become dear and beloved."

Thus, up to this point we have understood that when there is no existence of the qualities of dear-ness and happiness in the non-spiritual substance, i.e matter, and when they exist only in the spiritual substance, then the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krishna, Who is the root cause of all causes and the ultimate shelter and foundation of the spir-itual nature is the supreme blissful existence and the most dear of all. When all the extreme pleasure and love in existence attain their most transcendent form when they take shelter at His feet, then He is the unequalled and unsurpassed object of love. He is more dear than jewels and wealth; He is more dear

than wife and children; He is more dear than the body and senses; He is more dear than life itself. He is even more dear than the self because He is the ultimate form of the Supreme Self or *Paramātmā*, therefore who can be more dear than Him? One should know most that it is either by direct relation with the most dear Lord Krishna or even by relationship several times removed that anything becomes dear. Because the cause of dearness is always more than the effect, the most dear Lord Krishna is indicated as the ultimate cause of all dearness. Just as the sweet fragrance of a lotus is weak or intense in proportion to one's proximity to it, so similarly the fragrance of the "Govinda lotus", love makes everything smell sweet—the closer that something is connected to His love, the more dear it becomes. It is commonly accepted in general society also that the affection felt for the body inhabited by the soul is less than that for the soul itself. Then it is seen that for the pleasure of the soul, despite its sense of identity with the body, one is prepared to abandon it when it becomes unsuitable for that purpose, then it is not difficult to understand that the soul is more dear than the body. Also, the affection that one has for the body which is the object of egoistical identification is greater than the affection for the objects of possessiveness like wife and family. The reason for this is that there is a wider gap between the soul and those family members than there is between it and the body. What is more, the

affection that one has for wealth and possessions is usually not as great as that felt for wife and family. The reason for this again is that there is a greater sense of closeness or possessiveness or connection with the self felt for family members than for such wealth and possessions. Then again, the feeling one has for the receptacles or transporters of his wealth is less than that given to wealth itself. The proximity that something has to the soul is the gauge of its dearness. If that be the case, then it is a matter for contemplation and realization that the indwelling Supersoul or *Paramātmā*. Who is the cause and shelter of that very dear self, is even more dear than the soul itself and that Lord Sri Krishna, the most complete and perfect form of the Supersoul, the supreme form of all love and felicity, is the most dear of all.

Those truths which we find hinted at in this world are manifested in a most vivid way in the spiritual realm. The residents of Vṛindāvan are beyond the material nature and dwell in the spiritual and blissful abode of the Lord in transcendental bodies. Thus they are always merged in full blissfulness. In that realm there is not a tinge of any non spiritual substance; everything there is the form of happiness for everything is made up of the spiritual nature. In this *chinmoy* world all things are of that one spiritual quality and therefore the bodies, homes, sons, wealth, etc. there are all experienced as fully ecstatic; still the residents of Brāja feel a most deep and intense love

for personification of transcendental *ras*, the son of Nanda Mahārāj, Krishna. Their feeling for Him is unmatched by any affection toward house, family, body or wealth. This is His special characteristic as the controller of the internal potency's personal opulences. In His pastime of bewildering Brahmā it is learned that when Brahmā stole all the calves and cowherd boys of Braja then Krishna bewilded him by expanding Himself into the same forms as those very calves and cowherd boys. For an entire year's time Krishna acted out their daily lives in forest and pasture unbeknownst to anyone including Brahmā. Prior to that time the cows and older folk of Braja all felt greater affection for Krishna than they felt for even their own calves and children, but at the time of this pastime of Bewildering Brahmā, they suddenly started to feel a greater affection for their own personal offspring not knowing that actually they were all Krishna in disguise. When Māharaj Parikṣit (the hearer of the *Srimad Bhāgavatam*) heard this asked Śukadeva Muni (the speaker of the *Bhāgavatam*) to clarify the matter for the benefit of the people in general. He asked, "Oh brahmin, you have described that the residents of Braja felt more love for Krishna than their own children even though He was born as the son of another. Hearing this we have a doubt. We have seen in this world that a person will love his own son even if he is worthless rather than love even the highly qualified son of another, but the residents of

Braja at time began to feel a greater affection for their own personal offspring only at time when Krishna took those forms at time of bewildering Brahmā. Such feelings they had previously never experienced; please explain why this is so."

In answer to this, Śukadeva Muni gave very wonderful instructions about the dearness of the individual soul and the supreme dearness of Krishna. Those instructions can be taken as the best evidence of all the things which we have been describing up to this point. This memorable passage can be found in the Tenth Canto of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (chapter 14 verse 50-57).

*"sarvesāṁ api bhūtānāṁ nṛpa svātmaiva ballabhaḥ
ilare' patya-vittadyās tad-ballabhatayaiva hi"*

(10.14.50)

Śrīla Śukadeva said, "Oh king! the most dear thing to every living creature is the self. All other things like sons and wealth are dear because of the dearness of the self, it is not that they are dear in themselves."

*"tad rājendra yathā snehaḥ sva-svakātmani dehinām
na tathā mamatālambi-putra-vitta-grhādiṣu."*

(10.14.51)

"Oh king! it is seen that the amount of affection that all creatures have for themselves or their own souls is greater than that which they have for their

sons, wealth and other objects of possessiveness.”

*“dehātma-vādinām pumsām api rājanya-sattama
yathā dehaḥ priyatamas tathā na hy anu ye ca tam.”*
(10.14.52)

“Even those less astute persons who are uninformed about the spiritual nature of the soul and thus take it and the body to be same consider the body to be most dear, even more dear than all other things connected with it like family, friends, etc. (In this verse the word *“rājanya-sattama”* meaning “the most pious of kings” is especially significant. Those kings who are in the bodily conception of life cannot be called pious, but are *asat* or impious. Those who are aware of the existence of the *jīvatmā* are pious or *sat*. Those who familiar with the Supersoul or *Paramātmā* are even more pious or *sattara*, but anyone who is knowledgeable about Sri Krishna can be called *sattama* or most pious.) “Oh king! you are dear to Lord Krishna and you are fully aware that He is the supreme cause of all causes, so therefore you are most pious.”

*“dehe’ pi mamatābhāḥ cet tarhy asau nātmavat priyaḥ
yaj jīryaty api dehe’ smin jīvitāsū balīyasī”* (10.14.53)

“Even though the materialists take the body to be self, if at any time the understanding awakens somewhat that it is “mine” or a possession only, then it is not as dear as the self. Then it is dear only because of its relationship with the self. When the body be-

comes worn thin by the attack of some disease, then one wishes to remain even in such a body which is worthy of desertion in the hope of saving the self within it." (or the alternative meaning may be given) "Seeing that the soul is suffering due to presence in such a body his desire to remain in that body becomes weaker and he desires to free the soul from such a suffering situation." (In either case the affection for the soul itself is being described as greater than that for the suffering body.)

*"tasmāt priyatamaḥ svātmā sarveṣāṁ api dehinām
tad artham eva sakalaṁ jagad etac carācaram."*

(10.14.54)

"Therefore the self is the dearest of all living creatures because the whole world of body, sons, wealth, this and that all dear simply due to his presence. ("Oh king! If now you should ask, 'Well, I understand that the self which is beyond the body is more dear than anything else, but how is it that the son of the king of Braja, Krishna, has become most dear of all?' In expectation of such a question Srila Śukadev himself continued:)

*"kṛṣṇam enam avehi tvam ātmānam akhilātmanām
jagad dhītāya so' pyatra dehīvābhāti māyayā."*

(10.14.15)

"You should know that this Krishna Whom you all take to be the son of the king of Braja is in fact the

superself of all selves and yet, even though that is His actual glorious position, He appears as an ordinary embodied being by His inconcievable potency. Actually however, He is not an ordinary man governed by the laws of karma."

(In order to show that Krishna is not only the ultimate resting place of all living beings but is the supreme form amongst all the forms of Godhead such as Nārāyaṇ as well as all the material elements, Śukadev Muni describes Krishna's all pervasiveness and His being the cause of all causes.)

*"vastuto jānatām atra kṛṣṇam sthasnu carīṣṇu ca
bhagavad rūpam akhilam nānyad vasto iha kiñcana."*
(10.14.56)

"In actual fact, those who are knowledgeable about Krishna who are actually astute and sensitive philosophers, see all beings moving or non-moving as well as all the defferent forms of Godhead as being included in Him. There is absolutely nothing in creation outside of Him."

*"sarveṣām api vastūnām bhāvārtho bhavati sthitaḥ
tasyāpi bhagavān kṛṣṇa kim atad vastu rūpyatam."*
(10.14.57)

"Oh king! all things moving or non-moving, material or spiritual, have their existence due only to His presence within them. He is the source of all existences as the ablative cause. The cause again of that

Supersoul's cause is the supreme controller of all energies, Krishna, the Supreme Lord Himself. So, if you can, describe something beyond Him. (In other words, there is nothing.)”

Krishna is Himself the embodiment of super bliss and He is the most dear. He is the ultimate cause of all felicity and love. The waves of happiness and love which flow from Him give life and flavor to all existences in the universe, yet we would rather serve the objects of our own material senses rather than enjoy the beatitude of service to Him and instead of loving Krishna the most dear soul of our very souls, we would rather love so many inanimate external objects—this is called externalism or extroversion. When some self-forgetful *jīva* becomes inclined to the non-self or material nature, then thinking the body to be the self or “I” he takes anything connected with the body to be his or related to him. This mis-identification of the spiritual substance as matter, this distorted conception of the self as opposed to his real nature is called the proclivity of the soul to materialism. This materialistic proclivity is existing since time immemorial. Extroversion means aversion to the inner spiritual nature. Where there is a materialistic proclivity there an aversion to the spiritual nature is inevitable, because the two moods are completely contradictory. Whatever proportion there is of materialistic inclination there will be an equal proportion of aversion to the spiritual nature and similarly wher-

ever there is an aversion to spiritual nature there will be a corresponding proportion of inclination to matter. North and South are opposite directions. If one faces the North then his back will be to the South and if facing the South his back will be to the North. This kind of double relation is a simultaneous occurrence. Similarly, the simultaneous occurrence of the proclivity to matter and aversion to spirit or aversion to matter and aptitude for spiritual life are seen.

Aversion to spirit can also be called aversion to God, or in the ultimate sense aversion to Krishna. If some *jīva* should become averse to Krishna then his disposition to matter is inevitable. The unavoidable result of such turning toward the ignorance created by the illusory potency of *Māyā*, the material energy, is that the *jīva* has to be dunked in the whirling pool of material existence in the form of repeated birth and death. Because the two conditions of this disinclination to Krishna and inclination to material life occur simultaneously, it is stated in the *Chaitānya Charitāmṛita*:

*“krishna bhuli sei jīva, anadi bahirmukh
ata eb māyā tare dey songsār duḥkh”*

(C.C Madhya 20.104)

The *jīva* forgets Krishna and is thus always extroverted since time immemorial. As a result, *Māyā* makes him suffer the pangs of material existence.”

When the aversion to Krishna arises resulting in

the tendency to Māyā or matter, then the *jīva* has no perception of anything spiritual—only of material objects. Therefore, at that time, the *jīva* who is forgetful of his spiritual nature is equipped with material senses and then he is surrounded by material existence which is like a vast arid field. The *jīva*'s spiritual awareness is completely swallowed up by the fang filled mouth of ignorance and his spiritual self becomes finally nothing more than an emaciated skeleton. This can go by no other than the materialism or dullness of the spirit. Because the *jīva* is eternal and spiritual in nature he can never lose his existence or be completely destroyed in all respects, still, although he does not completely lose his existence, in the timeless grinding of matter he remains merged behind its scenes and hence he displays symptoms which pertain to matter. This can be called the disfigurement of the living entity who has fallen from his spiritual glory or the state of absorption in material activity.

As soon as the *jīva* becomes disfigured by absorption in or identification with matter, then the material ego and intelligence simultaneously arise and the spiritual ego or conception of being a part of the spiritual existence come about. At that time, a weak reflection of the dearness and happiness of the spiritual substance or *chit* potency manifests within the conglomeration of material body, home, family and wealth, etc. Because the *jīva* has no awareness of the

spiritual nature in his distorted state he becomes completely absorbed in serving the material objects, ascribing the reflected qualities of the soul on them and taking them to be innate. Therefore, because he is not able to perceive the existence of any spiritual beatitude beyond the body he feels the body to be the most dear thing, and those things which are most closely related to the body are a little less dear and the wealth and possessions which are less closely related are a little less dear again. This is the disfigured or unnatural condition or material bondage of the *jīva*.

Again, when the *jīva* has a temporary waking of intelligence and gets a little glimpse of the existence of the soul and that the body is simply the false object of his egoism and possessiveness, then this can be called the *chit-joro* situation, or mixed spiritual-material situation. This takes place when one becomes a little disposed to spirit and disinclined to matter.

When the *jīva* gradually becomes a little inclined to spirit and indisposed to matter by the inexplicably good fortune in the form of the mercy of great devotees, then he starts to experience spiritual ecstasies in the place of material happiness. This is called the constitutional position of the self or the spiritual situation. As the *jīva*'s self realization evolves through stages of complete, more complete and most complete he progressively experiences the Lord in His

Brahma, *Paramātmā*, *Bhagavān* and *Swayam Bhagavān* (or Krishna) forms.

The one undivided supreme spiritual entity responds to the comparatively superior or inferior mood of the spiritually inclined *jīva* by revealing Himself in the forms of *Brahma*, *Paramātmā* or *Bhagavān*. Although each individual naturally assumes his own personal experience of God's revelation of a particular form to be the best, still it is possible to judge these three manifestations without bias and assess their relative superiority and inferiority.

*“vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayaṁ
brahmeti paramātmēti bhagavān iti sabbdyate”*

(S.B 1.2.11)

“Those who are knowers of the truth call the one undivided Supreme Consciousness or non-dual conception the Absolute Truth. This monotheistic Supreme Truth when experienced as formless and indefinite then He is known as *Brahma*; when He is realized as the in-dwelling Supersoul then He is known by the followers of the *aṣṭāṅga Yoga* system as *Paramātmā*; and the devotees see Him in His personal, Supreme energetic form of *Bhagavān*.

An example given in the poem *Śīsupāla-vadham* of Nārada Muni being seen approaching Dwārakā from a distance by the residents of the town illustrates nicely how one non-dual spiritual substance or monotheistic Supreme Truth can be experienced differ-

ently by *jīvas* according to their different qualifications.

*“caya-tvisām ity avadhāritam purā,
tataḥ śarīrīti vibhābitākr̥tim.
vibhur vibhaktāvayavaṁ pumān iti,
kramād amuṁ ity abodhi saḥ.”* (1/3)

“First the Dwārakā residents saw simply a great radiant glow, as he came closer they were able to make out that it was an embodied *jīva* of some kind. Then, as he came still closer they could understand that it was a man and then when he came right near them they could recognize him to be Nārada.”

Just as Nārada was viewed by the Dwārakā citizens in four categories according to their ability to make him out: first, as simply “effulgence”, then as an “embodied being”, then “a man” and finally “Nārada”, so also the supreme monotheistic spiritual substance is viewed by different spiritualists differently according to their ability to see. They also have primarily four divisions of realization: *Brahma*, *Paramātmā*, *Bhagavān*, and the most complete form of the Lord, the *swayaṁ rūp*, *Swayaṁ Bhagavān* or Supreme Personality of Godhead. “Kṛṣṇastu bhagavān swayaṁ. (1.3.28) “Lord Krishna is the Supreme Person Himself.” Therefore He is the most perfect and complete conception of the non-dual supreme truth. *Brahma*, *Paramātmā*, *Nārāyaṇ* and all the other unlimited forms of Godhead are simply His different expansions and manifestations.

The impersonal feature of the Supreme *Bhagavān*, which is His effulgence or spiritual glory is known by the name *Brahma*. (“*madiyaṁ mahimānaṁ ca paraṁ brahmatī sabditaṁ*” S.B.8.24.38) The *jīva* is a particle of spiritual energy, therefore because this *Brahma* and the spiritual particle are non-different, the monotheist philosophers who realize their transcendental nature are unable to see anything beyond its featureless and formless existence. As a result they do not experience any separate existence of the *jīva*. The knower of *Brahma* identifies with that one undivided existence, which cannot be described by any adjective and thus he experiences no special characteristics or forms everything merges into that one immortal existence of *Brahma*.

The *Bhāgavad-rūpa* or personal feature of the Lord is not simply formless spiritual existence like the impersonal *Brahma* feature, but He is its resting place or foundation and thus a form-bearing or “solidified” energetic reality. (“*brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhaḥam*” BG. 14.27) The *jīva* falls into the category of an energy and is thus different from the energetic Supreme Lord. The *jīva* remains eternally distinct from Him as His separated part, yet he is bound in a sweet relationship of the shelter and the sheltered, the served and the servitor. The effulgence of the sun is an impersonal manifestation, yet its foundation or basis is a form-bearing reality, the sun globe; in the same way,

all though *Brahma* is an impersonal and formless feature of the Lord, its resting place, the Supreme Lord in His *Bhagavān* feature should be known to be a personal and form bearing reality. The *Paramātmā*, the indwelling Supersoul or *antaryāmī* is also a powerful (*shaktimān*) feature of the Lord, even though He is only a partial manifestation. The *jīvas* whose self-realization is connected with this feature of God also maintain their eternal individuality as His energies.

The topmost state of God realization is realization of Sri Krishna ("*Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*"). That is the absolutely last word in spiritual realization. He is the topmost manifestation of the energetic feature of the Supreme Truth; He is the Supreme Energetic. The author of Śrī Śrī Chaitanya Charitāmṛita has written that the spiritual glow which emanates from the body of the supreme manifestation of all the energetic forms of Godhead is known as His spiritual opulence and is also called the unvariegated *Brahma* of the Upanishads.

*"tñāhār anger shuddha kiron mondol,
upanishad kohe tāre brahma sunirmol."* (CC. Ādi 2.8)

"That which the Upaniṣhad have referred to as *Brahma* is the assemblage of the pure rays of spiritual effulgence coming from His body."

When the *jīva*'s extroversion or material life is fully rejected by him and his inclination toward spirit is

fully manifested, that “deariness” which had been imputed to the material objects or non-self pierces through the material coverings and finds its pure constitutional position. To the *jīva* who has attained the most perfect stage of self-realization, Krishna is the “most dear” thing, the other *tadekātmā* forms of the Lord like the *Paramātmā* are “more dear” and the *jīva* himself is simply “dear”.

The “solidified” or personal form of spiritual ecstasy, the manifestation of the Lord Who is engaged in various transcendental amusements and is situated within the spiritual effulgence, is far beyond reach of those who are cultivators of absolute monotheistic knowledge. Therefore, that spiritual opulence which has been called “dear” is to those absolute monotheists or *Adwaitins* the “most dear” thing of all. To them it is the supreme blissful situation. And those who are able to penetrate the impersonal rays of spiritual effulgence and approach the energetic reality Who is possessed of features, i.e. those who are practitioners of the eight part *yoga* system (*aṣṭāṅga-yoga*), they are also limited to this partial realization of the most full manifestation of the supreme energetic Personality of Godhead. Therefore, the supreme bliss or *Paramānanda* is to them the *Paramātmā* Whom we have described as “more dear” in the absolute viewpoint.

The Supreme Lord Krishna, Who is possessed of a form and all energies is the most complete and

perfect form of the *Paramātmā*. In His form as the son of Yaśodā, Krishna is the root cause of all ecstasy and love. Therefore He is the most dear thing of all. The only thing which can qualify one to approach Him is unblemished devotion, performed in complete attachment to Him. Just as the Indian water lily only spreads its petals when touched by the cooling light of the moon and at no other time, so similarly the blue lotus of Krishna only responds to the moonrays of pure devotion. Only those practioners of *rag-bhakti* (spontaneous and intense devotion) have the ability to recognize Lord Krishna as the most dear and therefore it is matter of experience for Krishna's pure devotees alone to know that Krishna is the *Rasarāj*, the supreme cause of the supreme ecstasy. He is the personification of all forms of transcendental loving exchange and therefore His devotees can understand He is the "most dear" and consequently they have a proper understanding of the constitutional positions of the "more dear" and "dear". The place for the reconciliation of all truths is *krishna bhakti* and the solution of all metaphysical problems is Sri Krishna.

Even though someone may contact or realized the existence of spirit, without the light of bhakti there is no possibility of getting any clue of the personal God Who exists beyond the majesty of the impersonal spiritual effulgence engaged in spiritual pastimes. Thus it is seen that after being touched by the frag-

ment of a ray of devotion due to some great fortune, the sages of the Upanishads who were inclined the impersonal Brahma attained to the knowledge of a personal truth behind the impersonal effulgence and they then prayed for the qualities of a surrendered devotee.

*“hiraṇmayeṇa patreṇa satyasyā pihitam mukham
tat tvaṁ pūṣann apāvṛṇu satya-dharmāya dṛṣṭaye”*
(B.U. 5.15.1)

“The face of the Supreme Truth’s form is hidden by a cover of blinding light. Oh Supreme Soul! Maintainer of the universe! Please remove that covering so that this devotee of Yours, dedicated to the Truth, will actually be able to see your true form.”

*“vyūha-raśmīn samūha tejo yat te rūpaṁ
kalyānatamaṁ tat te paśyami.”* (B.U.5.15.2)

“The rays of effulgence are blinding me, please remove them. Call off your sight-destroying lustrous glory. By your mercy, please let me have the sweet vision of your most auspicious form.”

When the *jīva* attains the direct vision of the Supreme Lord by means of the fullest expression of the proclivity toward Him, namely Kṛṣṇa-bhakti, then it is not that only the *Ātmā* becomes dear, at that time the self, the non-self—all the things in the universe take on the appearance of happiness. When Kṛṣṇa-bhakti appears, as soon as the latch of materialism is

completely lifted from the door of the heart, then the sweet waves of bliss flowing from the source of all *rasas* (tastes) drenches the *jīva* and start billowing within him. Then the whole universe becomes pleasing and full of love. This is the spirit of a devotee or one who has attained full God-realization and this can be called the full attainment of one's constitutional position. In that situation the entire universe is perceived as being full of happiness—"viśvam pūrṇa-sukhāyate". At that time there is no feeling in the heart other than bliss or happiness; nothing is seen that has no connection with Krishna. Seeing everything as being connected with the loving and sweet most dear person, Krishna, it's as if the whole world fills with sweetness and dearness. The devotee feels that lustrous cooling form of his Lord, blacker than a Tamal tree, a cowherd youth playing on His flute, standing at the focal point of that universal sweetness and dearness. He feels Him to be most dear ten million times, more dear than his own life. Is it possible that someone carrying a kindled torch could find darkness, no matter where it hides? So similarly, the devotee's heart is illuminated by the light of devotional ecstasy—hence for him there is no possibility of finding misery in the world—everything is supremely blissful. This is the apex of spiritual realization: The nature of a devotee is the highest conception of self that can be reached by the individual soul. This devotional nature (*bhāgavata-pada*) or realiza-

tion of one's self as an intimate of the supreme Lord is described in the *Śruti*.

*“jñātvā devaṁ sarva-pāśāpahāniḥ,
kṣīṇaiḥ kleśair janmamṛtyu-prahāniḥ
tasyābhidhānāt trtīyaṁ deha-bhede
viśvaiśvaryaṁ kevalam āpta-kāmaḥ “*

(Svet.U.1.11)

“One who has become fully knowledgeable about the Supreme Lord by the grace of the scriptures and the spiritual master no longer keeps any trace of possessiveness for the body and bodily connections. Because he has no such trace he feels no distress on their account and gradually, in this way, even the repetition of birth and death are stopped. Such a liberated soul, even if he may have to accept another body until the completion of the working-out of his karma, still he feels no pain on account birth and death. Finally, when by increasing his concentration on the Supreme Lord his subtle and causal bodies are completely destroyed he attains a position which is beyond heavenly realm of *Chandra* and the post of universal creatorship of *Brahmā*. He attains the *bhāavata-pada*, the fulfilment of all his desire in the spiritual planets which are of the quality of pure goodness and have not got the slightest touch of material contamination.”

Because it is impossible to explain or describe this most perfect stage of self-realization or attainment

of this *bhāgavata-pada* (the position of a devotee) by any worldly language or compare it to any worldly feeling, it should be known as inconceivable and understandable only by realization. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* an idea of the nature of that happiness of devotion or attainment of the *bhāgavata-pada* is given in the words of the Supreme Lord Himself:

*“na pārameṣṭhyaṁ na mahendra-dhiṣṇyaṁ,
na sārva-bhauṁsaṁ na rasādhipatyam
na yoga-siddhir apunarbhavaṁ va
māyā arpitatmecchati mad-vinānyat.”*

(S.B 11.14.14)

“The devotee who has surrendered himself completely to the Lord does not desire for anything other than Him. He does not want the positions of Brahmā or Indra or any other highly placed demigod; he does not want to become the emperor of this or any other planet; neither does he want mystic powers nor even liberation.”

The devotees who have attained the beatitude of devotional service to the Lord don't simply reject the material delights of the heavenly spheres of Brahma-loka or Indraloka, but they are not even the slightest bit eager to accept the different benedictions like “*salokya*” which are enjoyed by the Lord Himself. If they accept them at all it is only out of necessity to facilitate their service to Him. Lord Kapila instructs His mother, Devahūti, in the following way:

*“sālokya-sārṣṭi-sāmīpya-sārūpyaekatvam ity uta,
dīyamānaṁ na grhṇanti vinā mat-sevanaṁ janāh.”*
(3.29.13)

(“What more can I say about the happiness of devotional service) mother, all my devotees are so free from personal desires that even if I try to give them the opulences of *sālokya* (habitation in My abode), *sārṣṭi* (to have majesty equal to Mine), *sāmīpya* (to have My direct association), *sārūpya* (to have a spiritual form like Mine) or *sāyūjya* (merging into My existence), they are reluctant to accept any of them unless they can have service to Me.”)

In the situation where the innately blissful *jīva* shows an inclination towards matter and an aversion to spirit, then due to touch of his reflection or shadow, even those things which are not spiritual are identified as relations or possessions and thus even material objects become dear. On the other hand, when the *jīva* realizes his constitutional position, then due to his proclivity to Supreme Lord, his outlook becomes rightly situated and he no longer sees anything in terms of himself, i.e he no longer thinks of anything as being “my” possession or as *ātmīya* something which is specifically connected to himself. Then whatever he happens to cast glance at in the entire universe of moving and non-moving beings, everything is seen as being connected to its root cause, Lord Krishna, the ultimate form of the Supersoul. Thus

everything is seen as *paramātmīya*, or connected or related to the *Paramātmā*. Then everything becomes even more dear than it was previously when it was considered dear due to selfish ignorance. Due to the removal the distorted self conception or proclivity to matter and the realization of the constitutional position of inclination toward the *chit* potency, then there is no possibility of the mistaken sense of personal possessiveness remaining for the body, house, wife, son, husband, daughter, kinsmen, wealth, etc. The devotee even thinks of himself as "His" or Sri Krishna's, and then everything in existence, from the tiny specks of dust to the sun, moon, planets, asteroids, beaches, oceans, streams and rivers, mountains and plains, even the bacteria, all is seen in connection with Lord Krishna, Who becomes millions of times more dear than life itself. Then, because He is the most beautiful and the very form of love and the flavours of loving exchange or *rasa*, everything becomes sweet and beautiful and everything seems to the very epitome of happiness. To a young girl infatuated with her new lover, everything connected with his happy memory, his house, his relatives his clothes and ornaments, his bed or sitting place all are seen as sweet and dear. Still, they are dear because within all those things the face of her dear one emerges—and that, to her, is more sweet and dear than anything in the world. In the sameway, even though due to the connection with Krishna every-

thing in the world is filled with dearness and sweetness, the moon-like face of Krishna, which is the most dear of the dear, the most sweet of the sweet, enters and controls the central spot in all things.

*“mahā-bhāgavat dekhe sthābor jangom
tahañ tahañ hoy tañr krishner sphuron
sthābor jongom dekhe na dekhe tañr mūrti
sarbotro hoy nija ishṭa deber sphūrti.”*

(C.C Madhya 8.226-7)

“Whatever the *Mahā-bhāgavat* or highly advance devotee sees in the universe, there he immediately gets a vision of Krishna. He does not see the material objects themselves, he sees the form of Krishna. Everywhere he sees the manifestation of his own worshipable Lord.”

The attainment of this devotional mood *bhāgavatī-vṛittii* is certainly dependent on the greatest indescribably good fortune, but even so, those whose senses are polluted by ignorance and are blinded by attachment to the sense objects, upon superficially viewing the external appearance and activities of such a devotee may consider him to be in the throes of poverty and squalor and hence consider him to be in an especially undesirable condition of life and think of him as an object of charity or despal. Of course, that is to be expected because the *chinmay* substance is naturally invisible to those whose senses are absorbed in material activities and are averse to

the spiritual existence. Factually speaking the unblemished and uninterrupted ecstasy which is experienced by such a devotee absorbed in the mellows of bhakti can only be recognized and appreciated by those pure devotees who have similarly become favorable to the Lord. Both the date palm and the *neem* (margosa) trees stand on the same soil, but due to their different natures, the former draws sweetness from the earth and the latter extracts bitterness. The neem tree does not in interest itself nor does it even have the capacity to find any other flavor than bitterness in the vast surface of the Earth. On the opposite hand, the date palm does not concern itself nor even have the capability of finding out any flavor other than sweetness. Similarly, it should be known that the materially-inclined and spiritually-inclined living entities, due to their different natures and consequently different functions are only aware, on the one hand, of material feelings and misery, and on the other, spiritual feeling and transcendental beatitude.

From time to time it appears that the *mahā-bhāgavat* seems to be experiencing misery, but that is not due to the results of material activities like that of the ordinary *jīva*, therefore there is factually no touch of unhappiness there. A cat will hold her kitten by the neck with her teeth to transport it from place to place, but that kitten feels nothing other than happiness, whereas the very same situation to mouse is very fear-

ful. In a similar way, as long as he remains in the destructible material body, although the soul liberated from material ties is apparently in the same position as one bound up in them, the conditioned soul suffers greatly whereas the *Bhāgavat* are always blissful in all circumstances because he is fixed in his constitutional position.

The *jīvas* have all been scurrying this way and that in great anxiety, since time immemorial, both day and night, to find even a drop of happiness, yet it is only upon the dawning of *bhakti* to the Lord that the desired fathomless and shoreless ocean of pure happiness can be experienced—the experience of which means the fulfilment of the *jīva* and the meaningfulness of his existence. That happiness which depends on wealth and property cannot in actuality be called happiness when it is its merest shadow. Because we have no conception of true happiness we identify its shadow as the real things. As long as we desire for the shadow of bliss in the place of the true, we will have to depend on wife, children, wealth and property. The reflection of happiness or the ego on things which are themselves devoid of any blissfulness is called *sukhābhāsa*, the shadow of happiness. (*sukha*—happiness, *ābhāsa*—a shadow, reflection, hint). Thus there is absolutely no need to depend on any destructible material wealth or possessions or anything to gain *paramānanda* or the supreme state of bliss. Whether one be an emperor or one who eats the rem-

nants of food discarded by the dogs—everyone, rich or poor, high or low, male or female, young or old, learned or illiterate, has the right to attain it. All that is required is that one turn his vision inward and greet it, take that *paramānanda* to the heart in enthusiastic embrace. This is all that is required because it is an eternal thing, it is the everlasting possession of the *jīva*—natural and innate in him. In order to attain the impermanent and superficial shadow of happiness there is an absolute necessity for acquiring the material sense objects, but it should be remembered by every suffering and needy living being that to remain merged in the fathomless depths of the ocean of *paramānda* is possible for anyone, simply by turning his face towards the *chit* reality, towards the Lord, towards Krishna.

When untinted pure devotion rises, *bhāgavatas*, or *jīvas* who have attained full realization of their constitutional position, make not a trace of effort for their own pleasure even though they are absorbed in the ocean of transcendental joy. They desire only for that service to the Lord which will be the cause of pleasure to Him and that to such an extent that if their own happiness should become so intense that it becomes the cause of some disturbance to his service to Him, Who is the soul of his soul and dearer to him than millions of lives, only then do they take notice of it and condemning it bitterly for the interference it has become they wish to rid themselves of

it. This is the nature of pure bhakti! Not only do they not desire for any personal happiness other than the pleasure of the Lord, but there is no need for them to. “sukha-bāñchā nāi, sukha hoy koti-guṇ.” (C.C.) “They desire no personal happiness yet they experience a happiness millions of times of greater.” This is the factual condition of one who attains full *ānanda* and this is his real symptom.

He will now explain the reasons that a *jīva* who has attained full blissfulness has (1) no intention to gain any personal happiness and (2) no need for any such intention.

1. This is the nature of total bliss.

Wherever there is no need or shortage of an item there will naturally be no endeavor or desire in that direction in that place. Wherever there is a shortage or a complete lack of something, there we will observe a feeling of desire for the needed item. Wherever happiness is filled with incompleteness or deficiency, there is a need for desiring more, then there will be restlessness and longing for more happiness. On the other hand, if the pleasure is free from any deficiency or incompleteness, then what more can one ask for? He has attained the highest ecstasy, *paramānanda*, which is the condition of real peace. One who has submerged himself in the ambrosia of this *paramānanda*, who constantly bathes in the ocean of complete happiness due to realization of his constitutional position, for him there is no feeling

of want for any happiness, he does not become motivated to look for happiness at all. Therefore, one should know that because the devotees of the Supreme Lord have no desire for personal happiness, they alone can be called truly fulfilled by perfect happiness, they alone are peaceful and steady. This is because the nature of fulfilment by the attainment of perfect happiness is to be freed from desires and to become steady.

*“krishna bhakta nishkāṁ ata ev śhānta
bhukti mukti siddhi kāmī sokole aśhānta.”*

(C.C Madhya 19.132)

“A devotee of Krishna has no desires and is therefore peaceful, whereas all those persons who desire for sense gratification (*bhukti*), liberation (*mukti*) and perfections (*siddhi*) are all unpeaceful.

(2) Seeking the pleasure of the cause is the best means for its effect to find pleasure.

In the light of devotion, one who has attained the association and service of the Lord has clear and un-failing vision by which he can see the actual position of everything. For this reason, the devotees know fully well that for the *jīva* who is the effect or work of the Supreme Cause, the highest pleasure of all can be attained as a secondary by-product of the love that one receives from the Lord when one serves Him—even if he is fully free from the tendency to seek his own independent pleasure. Then no necessity or meaning is

seen in making any effort to find independent pleasure rather than look for His pleasure, nor is any purpose seen in desiring for the satisfaction of one's own senses rather than the satisfaction of the senses of the Supreme. This is the realization of a devotee whose mind is completely pure.

Rather than trying to please the effect, simply by working for the pleasure of the cause one will be able to simultaneously satisfy both of them. Therefore, only by favorable service to Him Who is the Cause of all causes and taking His pleasure as the purpose of the heart, the devotees see the whole world as well as their own selves to be happy. Instead of happiness seeking there is a complete forgetfulness of one's own happiness and rather than seeking for the pleasure of one's self there is the endeavour to effect the pleasure of Krishna. These are the best signs of the attainment of ecstasy.

It is stated in the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: (4.31.14)

*“yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena
trīpyanti tat-skandha-bhujopasākhāḥ
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyāṇām
tathaiva sarvārhaṇam acyutiṇya”*

Just as by pouring water on the root of a tree, its trunk, branches and twigs are all satisfied and nourished, and just as by satisfying the life air all the senses of the body are made satisfied, so too by worshiping Lord Krishna all other living beings as well as the individual self are worshiped.”

It is the popular conception amongst the materially conditioned souls who are averse to the service of the Lord that the best way to find happiness is by pleasing one's own self. To the *Bhāgavatas*, whose minds are completely pure, this popular theory is the product of illusion and full of mistakes. Those who desire for sense enjoyment (*bhukti-kāma*) and those desiring for liberation (*mukti-kāma*) can never penetrate the deceptions of ignorance. Dutifulness, earning a living, fulfilling one's sensual desires and ultimately salvation are considered to be the purposes of life, but each of these purposes is polluted by the falseness of self-deception and ignorance. Within these goals no hint is found of the search for the happiness of the Supreme Lord, the cause of all causes, but only for the personal pleasure of the *jīva* who is His creation, one of His effects. The first three *puruṣhārthas* (goals of human life), namely *dharma* (religiosity or dutifulness), *artha* (economic development) and *kāma* (fulfilment of desires) all fall within the category of *bhukti-kāma*, the desire for sense enjoyment. In all of these the symptoms of desire for the attainment of happiness and the avoidance of distress are clearly evident. The fourth *puruṣhārtha* (goal of life) is called liberation, *mukti*, which when obtained results in the merging of the individual entity with the *Brahma* effulgence and consequently the very nature of the soul to desire is destroyed. At

that time no desire for personal gratification can be observed, but during the period of cultivation of liberation a desire to free oneself from misery can be observed very clearly in the forefront. Thus anyone who thinks carefully and clearly will be able to understand that there is a subtle dedication to one's own personal happiness behind the scenes of the desire for liberation. Therefore the two-fold effort for personal pleasure, either clearly or unclearly can be seen in these two types of persons, namely the *bhukti-kāmī*, the seeker of sense gratification and the *mukti-kāmī*, seeker of liberation. Both are born of an egotistical or self-centered conception of life and have the selfish pleasures of the individual as their goal, of this there is no doubt. The four goals of life (*puruṣhārthas*), *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣha* are all filled with ignorance and self-deception, and so the revered writer of the Chaitanya Charitāmṛita has clearly informed that such self-deception or cheating is a stumbling block in the attainment of devotion to Krishna. (C.C Ādi. 1.50)

*“agyān tomer nam-kohiye koitob,
dharma artha kāma mōkkha bancha ei sob
tar modhe mōkkha bānchā koitob prodhān
jāhā hoite kṛṣṇa bhakti hoy antardhān”*

“The darkness of ignorance can be called self-deception (koitob) which takes the form of desires for religiosity, economic development, sense gratifi-

cation and liberation. Of them all, however, the desire for liberation is the foremost, because when it becomes strong there is no possibility whatsoever of attaining Kṛishṇa's devotional service."

That which is natural to the devotee or *Bhāgavata* can be called *bhakti* (devotion) or *bhāgavata-dharma*. Other than this *Bhāgavata-dharma* there is no other situation in which one becomes completely emptied of any desire for his own self-gratification. No other purpose of life or *puruṣhārtha* can be said to be entirely free of the propensity for self-deception. The significance or *bhakti* as differentiated from *mukti* (liberation) and *bhukti* (sense desires) is that in the mood of devotion the desire to please or satisfy transcends the individual ātma and takes shelter at the feet of the *Paramātmā*, Who is his cause. Only *bhakti* is free from the self-deception which comes in the form of the desire to please oneself. The goal of life for the devotee is a fifth goal or *prem* (love of God) which is beyond the other goals of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *moksha*. Thus anyone who thinks clearly and cool-headedly will be able to see that when *prem bhakti* is a fifth *puruṣhārtha* which transcends the dedication to selfish desires and seeks only the pleasure of the sense of the Supreme Lord Krishna, then there can be nothing other than it which is completely free from the aura of self-deceptiveness or cheating. The characteristics of this *bhakti* or *bhāgavata-dharma* have

been described at the very beginning of the topmost of all devotional literatures, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

“*dharmah projjhitaḥ kaitavo'tra paramo nirmatsaranām satam*” (1.1.2)

“In this *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, the highest religious activity of all is described. What is that highest religious activity or *parama-dhārma* like? It is *projjhita-koitavaḥ*, i.e. it is that in which quality of self deception (*koitava*) has been completely rejected. “In his commentary on this verse, Śrīdhara Swāmī has explained the prefix “*pra*” in the following way:

“*pra-sābdena mokṣābhisaṁdhir api nirastah.*” The self deception which is known as the desire for liberation has been specifically pointed out and condemned by the particle “*pra*” and thus it is shown there is no religious process which is as free from this self-cheating than the *Bhāgavata-dharma* explained in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. Therefore it is the religious process which is practiced by the saintly persons who are completely free from any enviousness or cynicism.

Only the swan-like devotees are seen to sport in the clear lake of this *bhāgavata-dharma* which is beautified by the full-blown white and red lotuses of the topics of Lord Krishna's qualities and activities. The *jīva* who has been blessed by the compassion of the great devotees attains his constitutional position of the *bhāgavata-pada*, the position of being a devotee. Thus the highest function of a pure *jīva* is *bhakti*,

devotion or the *bhāgavata-dharma* (the activity of a devotee). Even though becoming a pure *jīva* and being fixed in the *chit* or spiritual nature is better than being absorbed in matter, to become a devotee or *bhakta* is even better. The true nature of the living being is not simply pure *jīva*-hood but to become a devotee—this is the most pure and perfect stage of self realization. For this reason the devotee can be called the most pure soul. What is more, this most pure and perfect nature of the soul does not change after his miseries which arise from matter have come to an end, i.e. after he has attained to full and perfect ecstasy (*paramānanda*). The sign of the pure *ātmā*'s most pure and perfect realization is in his absorption in the pleasure of serving the Supreme Lord and his forgetfulness of all efforts for personal happiness. In a word, the service of Krishna or *kṛṣṇa-dāśya* is the basis of the most complete manifestation of the living being's true identity and activity.

“*dāśa-bhūto harer eva nānyasyaiva kadācana*”
(*Padma Purāṇa*. U.90)

“The *jīvas* are servants of Hori (Krishna) and they are never the servants of anyone else”. This is statement of the *padma-purāṇa*.

With the development of this devotional nature which is the *jīva*'s most perfect stage of self realization, then all those desires for self-gratification which were previously predominant take a secondary posi-

tion and gradually disappear completely. From this point, only the topics which are directed to the pleasure of the Lord are glorified. Then the sweet flavored incense of the desire for Krishna's pleasure fills the heart, driving out the putrid smell of the desire for personal sense gratification. What to speak of giving of the desire for sense gratification, the devotees are prepared to accept the frightful bondage of repeated births and deaths the cutting off of which is the liberationists' foremost achievement—as long as they don't have to give up hearing about the Lord for even a half a moment. Not only are they prepared to accept it, but the devotees who are completely free of selfish desires are even heard to pray for it! For example, the great devotee Prahlād prays:

*"nātha! yoni sahasreṣu yeṣu yeṣu vrajamy aham
teṣu teṣu acatā bhaktir acyutāstu sadā tvayi
yā prītir avivekānām viśayeṣvanapāyini
tvām anusmarataḥ sā me hrdayānnāpasarpata.*

(Viṣṇu purāṇa 1.20.18—19)

"Oh Lord ! In whatever species I should happen to take birth, I pray only that I should have unshakeable devotion in You. Let me have the same unfailing faith in You that the materialists have in sense gratification."

Singing harmony with that is the poet Vidyāpati:

*"ki e mānuṣh poṣhu, pākhī hoe jānamiyā,
athabā kīṭo potongo*

*koromo bipāke gotāgoti puno puno
moti rohu tuwā porosongo."*

"Whether I should be born as a man, beast or bird or even as a worm or insect, that is all right. Let me be born and die again and again as long as I can keep my mind fixed on topics related to You."

This is called pure devotion which is void of any personal motivation and is dedicated completely to the satisfaction and happiness of the Lord. These two examples given here are of this devotion in a primary stage of development, the following example is of the ultimate dedication to Krishna's happiness. Rādhārāṇī prays that even after leaving her body, may the elements which make it up be engaged in Krishna's service.*

*"pañcatvam tanur etu bhūta-mivahā svāmśe viśantu hutam
dhātāram praṇīṭatya hanta śīrasā tatrāpi yāche varam
tad vāpesu payas tadya-mukare jyotiś tadyāngasce
vyomni vyomd tadyā-vatdamāni dharā tat. tala-vṛnti'nilaḥ
(Padyāvali 336)*

Rādhikā says to Lalitā, "Dear friend, If Krishna never comes to Vṛindāvan again then I will never attain Him, that is sure, and He will also not get me.

* Of course Radharani's body is spiritual and there is no question of Her ever having to give it up like an ordinary conditioned soul, but the nature of the spiritual world is that this type of emotion can exist.

Thus I don't see any use in maintaining this troublesome body if it will be bereft of the opportunity to serve Him. When I leave it, don't bother trying to preserve it, just let it die and its elements be mixed with the prime elements of gross matter. I bow my head and pray to the Creator that he give me the following benediction: I pray that the water of my body mix with the water where He plays water sports, may my fire go into His mirror, my sky with the sky surrounding His courtyard, my air to be used in fanning Him and the earth for the paths where He walks back and forth. Let all the elements of my body be used in His service in that way."

Therefore, *bhakti* or devotion should be understood as far more glorious than either *bhukti* or *mukti* (sense enjoyment or liberation). "*sā tu karma-jñāna-yogebhyo' py adhikatarā*" (NBS 25). As long as even a speck of the dirt of the desire for one's personal happiness in the form of sense enjoyment or liberation pollute the heart, then there is no possibility of the most pure devotional happiness appearing there. Therefore the most worshipable āchārya, Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmi has written:

*"bhukti-mukti-sprhā yāvat piśāci hṛdi vartate,
tavāt bhakti-sukhasyātra katham abhyudayo bhabeḥ*

(BRS 1.2.22)

"As long as the witch of the desires for material sensual delights and salvation remain in the heart,

how can the happiness of pure devotion appear there?" (in other words it is not possible).

Any thoughtful person will thus be able to understand how no material words or feelings can come close to describing that happiness which comes from the completely unmotivated service to the Lord when the devotees not only reject material sense gratification but think of the happiness of liberation as something inauspicious like a witch or ghost. This is something that can only be understood by personal experience.

The desirers of material sense pleasure and liberation are never able to see or understand the universal plan of the Lord of the Universe in the way that the devotees can. First of all, those who think the body to be the self (*dehātma-vādī*) the materialists who desire only the pleasure of their senses, see the illusory existence of the temporal universe as the only reality and therefore they engage in fruitive activities with great attachment for the one purpose of sense gratification. On the other hand, those who think that everything is one spiritual identity. (*chid-ekatma-vādī*), the exclusive monists and liberationists think that the universe is a complete unreality like a dream and it is thus repugnant to them. Therefore, they try to remain absorbed always in spiritual knowledge. The *chit-kanātmā-vādis* accept the soul or self to be an individual fragment of consciousness and thus they desire for nothing other than service to the

Lord as they are endowed with the nature of devotees. These *bhāgavatas* know the universe to be one of His potencies and although they recognize its temporariness, they are neither completely attached to its thinking it to be the only truth, nor are they completely repulsed by it thinking it to be entirely false. The Supreme Lord explains this Himself to Uddhava:

*“yadṛcchayā mat-kathādau jāta-sraddhas tu yaḥ pumān
na nirviṇṇo nālisakto bhakti-yogo’ sya siddhidah.”*

(SB. 11.20.8)

“If by some indescribably great good fortune one gets the association of devotees and thus develops faith in topics related to Me, then if he does not become overly averse to worldly activities nor overly attached to them, then the practice of devotion will bring him perfection.”

A spider extends thread out of his body and is able to retract it also; its web is neither a permanent thing nor can it be denied as a complete falsehood. Similarly the universe is not a complete falsehood or dream-like figment or non-reality, either, even though it is temporary and subject to destruction. It is a transformation of the Lord’s illusory or material potency. Also, just as a spider’s offspring are able to manoeuvre on the web without any difficulty, but those insects of other species flies and moths all get entangled in it, so similarly the devotees who are situated in their constitutional position are able to freely move

about within the web created by *Māyā* within becoming entangled in it, whereas those who are of the opposite quality or nature like the materialists are easily trapped and bound up in it. The *Śruti*s have accepted the reality of the universe and have described it as a transformation of the Lord's energy, using this very example of the spider:

*“yathorni-nabhaḥ sṛjate grhṇate ca,
yathā pṛthivyām oṣādhayaḥ sambhavanti
yathā sataḥ puruṣāt keśa-lomāni
tathā' kṣarāt sambhavatiha viśvam” .*

(*Mund.U.1.1.7*)

“Just as the thread winds out from the body of a spider and can again be drawn in by him, just as the trees and plants grow out from the Earth or as the hairs grow from the head of a living man, so similarly the entire universe has expanded out of the one supreme indestructible personality.”

When the material energy is a substance like the internal energy of the Lord, then the reality of its existence cannot be denied. This universe can never be called a complete falsehood or dream-like unreality. Again, even though the material universe's existence is real, because it is the reverse of the internal potency of Lord, known as the external energy, it has a nature opposite to it. The internal potency is indestructible and immutable whereas matter is subject to destruction and change. Therefore, even though

the material universe's existence is true, because of its temporariness and mutability one has to say that both attachment to it thinking that it is absolutely real or aversion to it, thinking that it is absolutely false—both conceptions are partially true and yet both have an element of ignorance mixed in them. In the pure vision of a devotee the world's existence is true because it is based on God's existence. He sees the Lord as a noun being modified by the universe like an adjective of quality revealing His splendour. This universe is the first preacher of its Lord's unlimited qualities; it is as though the entire creation were ringing with the single sound of His glories. Thus, because the devotees see the universe as the glorifies of their most dear Lord's qualities, it also becomes dear—so how can they be repulsed by it? Yet, on the other hand, how can they become more attached to it than to their beloved Lord? Whatever the devotee sees that is beautiful, pleasing or attractive, it simply helps them to understand the boundless beauty, infinite sweetness and incomparable attractiveness of the Lord.

The complete fulfilment of the power of vision is to see the Supreme Lord, the Supreme Energetic surrounded by His energies. Only the devotees or *mahā-bhāgavatas* are able to see everything in its complete and actual form due to their devotionally influenced vision—and no one else. To consider only the energy to be true without the Energetic or to think the

energy to be completely false and to think that the truth is an impersonal and featureless entity—both of these conceptions are the result of incomplete vision. Therefore, the Srimad Bhāgavatam has described what is the most complete object or understanding or vision.

*“sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanah
bhūtāni bhagavaty ātma ny eṣa bhāgavatottamah.”*
(SB 11.2.45)

“One who sees the Supreme Lord manifested within the essence of every existence, conscious or unconscious, and sees all things as being within His manifested form is called the topmost advanced *bhāgavata*.”

Just as the inevitable destiny of those who try to erase the existence of the Lord of the universe and simply enjoy the delights of sense gratification within it is to become immersed in the greatest depths of darkness, so similarly those who announce that this universe which reveals the Lord's greatness is completely false and non-existent and who thus deny the Lord's unlimited beauty and sweetness along with His infinite affection, compassion, love and mercifulness and other qualities, they will have to enter an ever deeper darkness than the aforementioned. Therefore the Śruti has said:

*“andham tamah praviṣanti ye'vidyām upāśate
ttato bhuya iva te tamo ya u vidyāyām ralah”* (Iso. U.9)

"Those who follow the path of ignorance (activities devoid of devotion) must enter the region of deepest darkness, whereas those who follow the path of knowledge (the culture of knowledge devoid of devotion) must enter into an more tenebrous region."

Therefore, those who deny neither the existence of the world nor of God but who know the proper way of adjusting the energy with the Energetic and see them both in the proper perspective have a complete vision because they don't ignore any aspect of existence. The Śruti has also stated:

*"yas to sarvāni bhutāni ātmany evānupaśyati
sarva-bhuteṣu cātmanam tato na vijugupsate."*

(Iso.U.6)

"One who sees all things as being present in the Supreme Soul and sees Him in all things never hates or envies any one."

The *jīva* can attain immortality by knowing the Lord through this desert-like, destructible and temporal existence which nevertheless reveals His glory and thus he can overcome death and establish a direct relationship with the Lord. The Śruti further says:

*"vidyām cāvidyām ca yas tad vedobhayaṁ saha
avidyayā mṛtyuṁ tīrtvā vidyayāmtam aśnute."*

(Iso.U.12)

"He who knows both the paths of knowledge and ignorance (and not taking one only and rejecting the

other but knows both of them together to means for attaining the one God) uses *avidyā* (*karma* or activities) to conquer over death and *vidyā* (*jñāna* or the path of knowledge) to attain immortality.”

As a result, the devotees are neither extremely attached nor averse to the material existence, but they see it as dear and beautiful due to its relationship with the infinitely sweet Lord Krishna. They want to embrace every molecule and atom in love—this is the meaning of universal love. Until one develops deep devotional sentiment for the Lord of the universe and His creation there is no possibility of a manifestation of such all—encompassing universal love.

The intense spirit of renunciation that is visible in the devotional scriptures and in the instructions and example of the devotees is just to shake the extroverted *jīvas* from their narcosis of illusion and to further enthuse the devotees and would-be devotees along the path of devotional practice. This is because the culture of knowledge and renunciation are not divisions of devotion (“*gyān boirāgyo bhaktir anga kobhuno*”). If some intimately related person comes to please a friend with sweet words and conversation, if the friend is sleeping he may first have to use some harsh or rough words to rouse him; similarly, those who are grogged after drinking the brew of sensualism need to be aroused and enthused to the process of worshipping the Lord and this the pur-

pose of the message of intense renunciation that is seen on the path of bhakti.

The natural inclination of a vine is to take shelter of a tree and until it does so its mood of dislocation or depression cannot be removed. Similarly the *jīva* has a natural tendency to see a tree-like support, by taking shelter of which all of anxieties and depression, all of his sadness and difficulties in life will come to an end. Even though this desire is natural in the living entity, when he is blanketed by heaps of material energy it appears in a distorted form. Anyone who examines the *jīva*'s psychology intently will be able to understand this. When this desire-creeper of the *jīva*'s becomes purified and perfected by the dawning on some great good fortune, then when taking shelter of that supreme "tree" it desires nothing else but its satisfaction. That is called the full expression of the desire-creeper or the *jīva*'s special function and it can also be called *bhakti* or the *bhāgavatī-vṛitti*. The creeper of devotion's most perfect shelter is the desire tree known as Sri Krishna.

Again, just as it is the desire of the young creeper to take shelter of a youthful Tomal tree, so it is also true, although perhaps not overtly, that the Tomal tree has some desire within him to act as her shelter. This mutual relationship of the support and the supported that exists between the vine and the arbor is not simply a relation of the giving and taking of benefits—there is an intrinsic exchange of love over and

beyond that, a relation where there is no evidence of necessity on the part of one and no such need felt by the other—both parties are equally anxious for their meeting and both feel equal need for it.

There is a similar mutual sentiment in the relation of the ultimate form of the Supersoul, Lord Krishna, and the individual *jīva*; both equally feel the necessity of their union. This gospel of the mutual anxiety of both these parties for reunion is found only in the philosophy preached by the devotees. This message heralds the victory of devotion. The sweet, intensely emotional coming together of the Supreme Lord and the *jīva* can be called the “great union”. The knots of this great union can only be tied with the ropes of love, otherwise it is not possible. This message of hope was distributed in the world of the *jīvas* through the cult of devotion, especially that branch of it which was formed by Lord Chaitanya Dev. Other than in this religion of *prem*, the thesis of all religions is that for a person to find ultimate beatitude and the termination of distress he absolutely must attain to either *Brahma*, *Paramātmā* or the Supreme Lord, but they mention no need for the Supreme Truth to attain the *jīva* because He is eternal, pure, liberated—all His desires are fulfilled, He requires nothing so therefore He knows no needs. Still, they say, if He should pick up any surrendered *jīva* out of the ocean of material life and give him a place at His feet that is due only to His great glorious qual-

ity of compassion. He is the benefactor and the *jīva* is the benefitted. In other words, the only reason He saves the *jīva* is for the sake of the *jīva*'s need, He Himself feels no personal demand. In the relation of the Supreme Truth with the living entity this may be true, but in that realm where we stretch to the limits of the Absolute Truth where the *jīva-hood* of the living entity wanes and he becomes a devotee, in that kingdom of *prem-bhakti* or loving devotion it is not the relation of the Supreme Lord and His *bhakta*. This most confidential message is beyond the ken of any other religious system, this great gospel of hope has been brought only by the religion of love, *prem-dharma*. Only through the devotional school has it been revealed that just as it is absolutely necessary for the *jīva* to contact the Supreme Lord, so in the same way, or even more so, The Lord feels an absolute necessity to attain the *jīva* in his pure spirit as a devotee. When the purest tendency of the living being, i.e. the desire to serve the Supreme Lord, is awakened in him, and that desire sets out like a creeper to take shelter at His feet, then the desire-tree of Krishna is also always anxious to accept and embrace her in affection. The Lord can be compared to a bee who is always eager to drink the nectar of devotional feeling which flows from the flowers on the *bhakti-vine*. Although he is naturally self-fulfilled, still to the bumblebee of the Lord, that nectar of *prem* is His life and soul. The Supreme God of gods and Lord of

all becomes subordinate to His devotee and is controlled by their love—this is one of His greatest glories and never a fault. Although He is the ocean of qualities, this subordination to His devotees is His most wonderful and valuable quality. He is always desirous of seeing the development of the vine *prem-bhakti* so that He can pick its blossoming flowers. That the Lord, Who is completely self-sufficient, should feel such a need is like the dawning of the seen of hope for the *jīva* when he is floundering at the furthest borders of the deepest darkness of hopelessness. Even though these rays of light coming from the doctrine of devotion are sufficient to illuminate the world, those living entities who have the nature of owls and close their eyes at light are completely unable to appreciate it, "*uluk na dekhe joiche surjer kiron.*" (C.C Adi 3)

Only the religion of *prem* has been able to preach that just as the pollen of flower is the life of a bumblebee, so too the Supreme Lord's vital essence is the honey of *prem* which flows from the full-blown lotus of the devotee's heart. The Supreme Lord's desires are unlimited hence His thirst for *prem* is also unlimited, consequently until He gets the honey that drips from the hearts of unlimited devotees there is no quietening of His unlimited anxiety. For this reason, He has been coming and going from His abode to this material world since time immemorial and will continue to do so. A bird becomes anxiety ridden

when his mate leaves the nest, thinking her to be in danger, and until she is reestablished in her proper place he comes and goes, back and forth, again and again; he wants to give her the touch of his sweet beak, to free her of her danger and feelings of deficiency by returning her to her "constitutional" position in the nest. All these endeavours are not the result of his compassion on her, it is something beyond compassion, a kind of transcendental feeling of need which is born of their loving relationship. In the same way, the purpose of the Lord's incarnations is not simply to come again and again to show compassion on the living beings, within the display of mercy a personal requirement of the Lord's is hidden. That requirement makes Him feel that He Himself can't go on until the fallen *jīvas* are brought back to His side. Even if the world should fill with silver, gold, pearls, diamonds, the bee will not so much as cast a glance in their direction, he only looks with thirsty eyes in the direction of the dew-dropped lotus as it starts to open in the first light of dawn. Even if the world should fill with unlimited riches, and wealth, if there were no longer any flower blossoming, if there were no more honey to be found, then the heart of the bee would certainly be filled with the greatest anxiety. Similarly, although the Lord is engaged since beginningless time in relishing the taste of the nectar of devotion from the unlimited lotus-hearts of unlimited devotees, still if no new lotuses blossom

from that section of eternally bound *jīvas* then the Lord, Whose only pleasure is *prem*, feels His heart fill up with anxiety. Then it is as though the world of *prem* fills with a turmoil of anxiousness! Only He Whose life and soul is the nectar of the love of His devotees can say how valuable every single drop of it is to Him. Therefore, just as it is the great necessity of every living being to attain the Lord, the Lord Himself has an even greater need to get the *jīva* as His devotee. Wherever there is to be a meeting of one who has a need for it and another who doesn't, then there is a very dim light of hope. A hungry guest undoubtedly feels the need for food, but if his host does not feel the need to feed him then it will not be a very easy time for the guest. On the other hand, in a case where the householder feels the necessity to feed his guest even more than the guest desires to eat, then there is a definite possibility of their both being able to fulfill their desires. Therefore we should all establish this message which teaches us of the mutual need of both the Lord and the *jīva* for union in the temple of our hearts as our brightest light of hope. The doctrine of devotion is the giver of this message of reassurance, whose ultimate revelation is in teaching of love given by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya.

Other than by the process of *prem bhakti* it is not very easy to attain union with the Supreme Lord because in those cases there is a question of the living being's relation with the Supreme Truth. For an

unfulfilled *jīva* it is certainly an absolute necessity to link up with the Supreme Truth in order to accomplish his purposes of freeing himself from material suffering and attaining happiness, but because the Supreme Truth Himself has no requirement for anything other than devotion He does not feel any need for those living beings who are simply on this lower rung of self-realization of *jīva-hood*. Being completely self-satisfied and free from any personal needs, He is somewhat indifferent to the egocentric necessities of the *jīvas*. The Supreme Lord is thus indifferent or equipoised towards all the living beings who are on the platform of *jīva-hood*. In that state no one is His object of special favor or envy, but in the case where He has a personal need to fulfill, in the case of His devotees, He is not able to remain apathetic—there He is eager and anxious to get His devotee and even to become a devotee Himself. The Supreme Person's simultaneous favoritism and neutrality are described by Him personally in the *Gītā*:

*“samo’ haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu na me dveṣyo’ sti na priyaḥ
ye bhajānti tu mām bhaktya mayi te teṣu cāpy ahaṁ.”*

(9.29)

“I am equally disposed to everyone. No one is My friend, nor is anyone My enemy. (After here describing His neutrality towards the ordinary living beings, the Lord describes His dependent relation with His devotees) Those who worship Me with devotion, how-

ever, are always in Me and I am always in them."

In the relationship of the ordinary *jīva* and the Supreme Truth, there is either a unilateral sense of urgency or mutual apathy, thus in either case the union of the two parties is either very difficult or a complete impossibility. Therefore, in such a case, He remains the unknown and the unknowable, the infinite and inconceivable entity to those living beings. For this reason He is beyond the mind and senses of everyone but the devotee. In connection with the neutrally situated Lord and the *jīva* who has an ego-centric purpose to fulfill, the *Śrutis* have said: "*yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha.*" (*Taitt.U.2.9.1*) "From Whom the mind and words return after failing to know Him ..."

Without the connecting thread of devotion there is no possibility that both the *jīva* and the Supreme Truth will both feel the necessity for union. The Supreme Lord has no desires—He is completely self-satisfied (*āpta-kāma*), but in His ultimate form as Krishna He becomes *bhakti-kāmī* or desirous of attaining the devotion of His *bhaktas*; there the *jīva* is manifested in his most perfect or ultimate possible stage of evolution—he has the nature of a devotee. Because the Lord and His devotees are connected by the thread of devotional love there is a possibility from both directions that the two will be united. Where the form of the Lord is the most perfect manifestation of the Supreme Truth, there His thirst for

relishing *bhakti* is always fully present and He eternally feels the need for it. It is only toward the devotion of the *bhakta* that He ever feels any kind of sense of need, other than that He has absolutely no need for anything whatsoever. Just as the Śrutis have described the failure of the mind and senses of the searching *jīva* to reach him because of His being fully selfsatisfied and hence having no purpose to fulfill, they have also described His desire to reveal Himself to a chosen devotee.

*“nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo
na medhsā na bahunā śrutena
tam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas
tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanm svām.”* (Kath. U.1.2.23)

The Supreme Soul or Truth cannot be reached by the teaching of the Vedas, by great intelligence, nor by vast amounts of scriptural knowledge, he whom He should choose will know Him for it is to such a devotee that He reveals His own body.

This statement of the Śrutis clearly reveals the desire of the Supreme Truth to take the devotee as His own. He is not attainable by the study of the Vedas or by any other process, but should He select some individual as His very own then that person will be able to attain to Him. He reveals His Supreme transcendental *sat-chit-ānanda* form.

Just as on the one hand this verse has shown the desire of the Lord to make a personal choice, so also

by saying that He is attainable by “such a devotee” it indicates that He reveals Himself to the devotee because of his devotion. Thus it is seen that there exists a simultaneous desire to choose one another and to be chosen and as soon as such a situation arises their union immediately takes place. In other words, the devotee takes the Lord into his heart and wishes to be taken by Him and the Lord, being chosen by him also takes him into His heart. This successive exchange between the devotee and the Lord—of capturing and laying claim by giving the self and giving the self by capturing and making one’s own. The simultaneous and equal fulfilment of both parties congruent desires is called the “great union”.

*“sādhavo hṛdayaṁ mahyaṁ sādhuṇāṁ hṛdayaṁto aham
mad anyat te na jānanti nāhaṁ tebhyo manāg api”*

(9.4.64)

“The saintly persons all surrender their hearts to Me, I know the hearts of the *sādhus*. They donot know anything else but me and I also know nothing other than them.” These are the words of the Lord Himself in the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and this is the message of the great exchange of hearts that is the “great union.”

Although He is infinite He accepts finitude by the love of His devotees. Although He is unlimited He allows Himself to be limited by the arms of His devo-

tee. He has no desires, yet He wishes for the embrace of the devotee. He has no form and yet He manifests a perfect and nectarean form before the loving eyes of the *bhakta*; He is inconceivable and yet He always appears on the state of the mind and in the line of vision of His devotee. This decree of hope is the exclusive announcement of the devotional philosophy within this world of death; this great hope can only be fulfilled by performance that devotion.

Therefore the Lord has said in the Hari Bhakti Sudhodaya

*“sadā mukto’ pi baddho’ smī bhakteṣu sneha rajjubhiḥ
ajito’ pi jito’ ham tair avasyo’ pi vaśikṛtaḥ
tyakta-bandhu-jana-sneho mayi yaḥ kurute ratim
ekas tasyāsmi sa ca me na cānyo’ sty avayoḥ suhṛt.”*

“Although I am eternally liberated I am nevertheless bound up by the devotees’ ropes of affection; I am unconquered and uncontrollable, yet by them I am conquered and controlled. That person who gives up his feelings of attachment and possessiveness for his own family members and loves Me alone, then he alone is Mine and I alone am his. Neither of us has any other friend.”

If the Lord were simply *āpta-kāma*, or self-fulfilled, unlimited and inconceivable then the *jīva* would never have any hope of a great union with Him, but the fearless message of the religion of *prem* is that the Lord is waiting with both arms outstretched to actuate such a grand union with the *jīvas* who have awakened their most perfect nature. Thus the hope-

less hearts of the fallen souls can fill with the light of hope. No matter how helpless and insignificant any *jīva* is, if he simply desires to surrender himself to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord and in that consciousness stretches forth both arms to the Lord single-mindedly, even if he is unable to advance on his own, still the Lord will come Himself and taking that *jīva* to be His own, gives His very self to him. If He Himself did not want the *jīva* and felt no need to be united with him, if there was not any anxiety in His heart and if He Himself did not come and stand at the gates of the heart of the one who wanted Him, then the hopes of the *jīvas* to be reunited with Him, the life of their lives, the Supersoul of their souls and eternal companion, the lover of their heart, would all merge into nothingness. Thus we think in the same manner as the Bengali poet Śrīmat Surendranāth Goswāmī (from his book "*Premāśhru*—Tears of love.")

*"If He Himself did not come, But in that false hope,
He Who is unlimitedly great, in the still and silent night,
to these two tiny arms, stealing slowly and softly,
Then what would be the use, He comes heart to heart,
if maintaining false hopes? and there is an exchange of love."*

If someone wants to hold Him then He runs forward to let Himself be held. Just as the bumblebee voluntarily allows itself to be bound up in the lotus petal, so too the Lord voluntarily, willingly allows

Himself to be bound up in the devotee's lotus heart. It is not simply a question of compassion.

Just as a newly married couple both choose each other and are similarly chosen or favored by one another and then their happy meeting is arranged, such a meeting is possible because of their mutual desire for one another, otherwise it would never happen, so too the Lord wishes to attain the aggregate of all living entities as His devotees, and holding the garland of acceptance He is waiting patiently. If a *jīva* is able to bend his head to the rosy-hued lotus feet of the Lord and with a pure and honest desire for Krishna's devotional service he carries the offering of love, his very self, to give to Him, his eyes filled with tears like the dew-colored lotus of dawn, then the Lord eagerly takes him into His heart and makes him His own.

The *Śrūtis* have shown clearly that is only devotion that makes the union of the Supreme Lord and the *jīva* possible and that for this purpose, the Supreme Truth Who is beyond the range of the mind and senses comes into their purview,

*"bhaktir evainam nayati, bhaktir evainam darśayati,
bhakti-vaśo puruṣaḥ bhaktir eva bhūyasī."*

(*Mathara Śruti* quoted in *prīti sandarbha* 65)

"Devotion takes the devotee to the Lord's abode; it shows him the form of the Lord, The Lord is controlled by devotion, therefore devotion is the best means for attaining Him."

The Lord Himself has revealed in great jubilation that He is dependent on His devotees even though He is independent, that He is subject to His devotee even though He is the Lord of all and that even though He is self revealing He can be revealed by devotion.

*“aḥaṁ bhakta-parādhīno hy asvatantra iva dviḥja
sādhuvhir grasta-hṛdayo bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ
nāhaṁ ātmānam āśāse mad-bhaktaiḥ sādhubhir vinā
śrīyaṁ cātyantikīm brahmaṇ yeṣāṁ gatir ahaṁ parā
ye dārāgāra-putrāpta-prānān vittaṁ imaṁ param
hitvā mām śaraṇaṁ yātāḥ kathaṁ tāṁs tyaktum utsahe
mayi nīrbaḍḍha-hṛdayāḥ sādhabaḥ sama-darśanāḥ
vase kurvanta mām bhaktyā satstriyaḥ sat-patīm yathā”*
(S.B 9.4.63-66)

“I am fully under the mastery of My devotees, for them I maintain no personal independence. Only they are dear to Me and My heart has been captured by them. I love no one but the devotees who love Me alone; I don’t even love My ownself that much nor Lakṣmī who is the closest to Me. As a result, anyone who sacrifices son, wife, house, family members, wealth, life itself and even this and future worlds as well, and takes whole hearted shelter of Me will never be given up by Me. How could I feel any enthusiasm to abandon them? The devotees who are equal to all, who bind Me in their hearts, are able to control

Me by their devotion in the same way that a chaste wife holds sway over her husband.”

Other than by the path of devotion there is no other means for directly meeting the Lord. The Supreme Lord Himself told Uddhava in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* that “*bhaktyā ham ekayā grāhyaḥ*”—“I can only be attained by pure devotion.” Even more explicitly He stated :

“*na sādhayati mām yoga no sāṅkhyaṁ dharma uddhava
no svādhyāmyas tapas tyags yathā bhaktir mamorgita.*”

(S.B 11.14.20)

“Oh Uddhava, nothing can sway Me the way that ever increasing devotion does not practice of the eightfold yoga system, nor philosophical examination of the material elements, nor study of the scriptures, nor austerities, nor renunciation.”

Furthermore, if *yoga* or *jñāna* are able to give any realization of the Supreme Truth in His impersonal or partial manifestations, one should know that it is due to a mixture of *bhakti* with those processes. In other words, to the extent that devotional service is mixed with the practice of *jñāna* (culture of spiritual knowledge) and *yoga* (the eightfold mystic system) that is the measure of how complete his realization of the Supreme will be. Without the association or mixing in of the practice of *bhakti*, all other processes like *karma*, *yoga* or *jñāna* are completely fruitless, meaningless like the false nipples of the goat. The most

revered author of *Śrī Chaitanya Charitāmṛita* has written this teaching of the scripture's essential purpose in a most clear way ;

*"bhakti vinā kono sādhan dite nāre phol,
sob phol dey bhakti swatantra probol.
aja-golo-stono-nyāy onno sādhan,
ata eb hari bhaje buddhimān jon."*

"Other than devotion no practise is able to independently give any fruits. Bhakti is completely independent, however, and is competent to give all results. Other practices are all worthless like the nipples which appear on the neck of a goat. Therefore an intelligent person worships Krishna."

The practices of *karma*, the performance of prescribed duties, cultivation of impersonal spiritual knowledge and the discipline of yoga all become complete when they add the devotional element. Therefore they are called "*āropa-siddha*" or "*sanga-siddha*" meaning that they are not perfect in themselves but requires the addition of the devotional element. The inconceivable power of pure devotion, the addition which makes all other practices competent to yield their desired fruits, and without which they are impotent, cannot be expressed by any material mood or language—especially its potency in the matter of giving the direct association of the Supreme Lord. It is absolutely imperative that we remember the only means for the *jīva* to have a "grand union"

with the desire tree of the Lord is through the creeper of pure devotional desire.

Because *jñāna*, *karma*, etc. are worthless without the help of *bhakti*, in many places those practices are found to be criticized in the scriptures. We have selected only a few for evidence in this place.

The cultivation of knowledge without devotion is described in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as a useless waste of time.

*“śreyah sṛtiṁ bhaktiṁ udasya to vibho,
kliśyanti to kevala-bodha-labdhave
tesām asau kleśala we śisyate,
nānyat yatha sthūla-tusāva ghātinām.* (10.14.4)

Brahmā says to Lord Krishna, “oh Lord, anyone who gives up the process of devotion service to you, who are the fountainhead of all the perfections of human life, and labors at the cultivation of knowledge, will find that he gains nothing but the fatigue of his travails in the way that a person who beats the empty husks of grain does.

*“naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam
na śobhate jñānam alam nirañjanam
kutaḥ punaḥ śāśvad abhadram iśvare
na cārpitam karma tad-apy akāranam .”* (SB 1.5.12)

“Without feeling (i.e. *bhakti*) for Achyuta (Krishna) when even pure consciousness of *Brahmā* is not very wonderful, then how will material activities which are

always the cause of misery, even if performed without desire for fruitive results possibly be of any value if they are not offered to the Lord?"

The scriptures also say that just as knowledge without devotion is useless and even faulty, so also with other practices.

"viṣṇu-bhakti-vihīnānām śrautāḥ smārtās ca yāḥ kriyāḥ kāya-kleśaḥ-phalam tāsām svairiṇī-uyabhicāravat."

(from the *Skanda Purāṇa* quoted in *Bhakti Sandarbha* 172)

"If the ritualistic activities which are prescribed in the *Śruti* and *Smṛiti* are performed without a touch of devotion to Lord Hari, then all those rituals will be the cause of suffering only. Not only that, but it is to be considered faulty like the licentiousness of a wanton woman."

Thus pure devotion which is able to control the Supreme Lord is completely independent and perfect in itself and without its assistance, *karma*, *jñāna* and other practices are impotent. Such pure devotion has no other purpose than the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī, after gathering the essence of all the scriptures gave the following definition of this pure devotion in his book. *Bhakti-rasāmṛita-sindhu* :

"anyābhilāsitā-sūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anavṛtam ānukūlyena kṛṣṇanu-śīlanam bhaktir uttamā." (1.1.11)

“*Bhakti* is that practice or mental, physical or verbal endeavor executed in connection with Him and done for His pleasure, (This is the external or primary symptom of devotion.) and if that *bhakti* is free from any other desire and is not mixed with or covered by any practice of *jñāna* or *karma*, then it is called the best devotional service or *uttama-bhakti*. (This is *bhakti*’s secondary or marginal symptom.)

When this *uttamā bhakti* or topmost level of devotion appears, then the living being’s most advanced stage of perfection has been reached and he should be known to be truly and perpetually blessed. In the heart of the Supreme Lord there is only one need or desire which is always awake; even though He is eternally united with the unlimited pure devotees or *nitya-mukta* living beings in His abode, still He is always desiring for a great reunion with fresh pure devotees from the material world. When a *jīva* attains pure devotion then he also has no other desire than to be united with the Lord for the purpose of serving Him. When this intense hankering to attain the Lord is fully manifested in a *jīva*’s heart, then this “great union” is not very long in coming.

The Lord always wants to have the *jīva* in his most perfect form, i.e. as a devotee. The Lord’s wanting to attain the *jīva* in this way is an eternal desire of His and thus as soon as the *jīva*’s desire to attain the Lord is awakened then he immediately gets Him. Ordinarily, we who do not get the association of the Lord

attribute it to His unattainability, but that is not the actual fact which is that we don't *really* want Him. Can there be any thing more accessible than that which is attained simply by desiring for it? When one can attain the Lord simply by wishing for Him, then to call Him "easily attainable" would be more reasonable than calling Him "unattainable", but He seems most difficult to reach for the ordinary *jīva*. The only cause, however, for such a great misfortune is that he is lacking in desire for Him. When there is a feeling of mutual need, when each person wants the other, then such a pair's coming together is inevitable, at least it shouldn't be difficult. The desire to obtain the *jīva* as a devotee is a desire which is eternally aroused in the heart of Lord, and as soon as such a longing for the Lord is similarly awakened in the *jīva*'s heart, then their union is not even a moment away in coming. Therefore the actual fact is that the Lord is very easily available to the *jīva*, but His apparent non-availability is due simply to the lack of desire on the part of the living entity. In other words, his not wanting Him is the cause of his not getting Him. We all want something, but it is our great misfortune that we do not want the one thing by getting which all other desiring, all our wants, will come to an end.

Now we should try to clearly understand what is meant by "desiring." When we speak of desire we mean the way that a hedonist wants sense objects, the way a sick man wants health, the way a thirsty

man wants water, a hungry man wants food and a poverty-stricken man wants money. Wanting God in that way is called *prema-bhakti*. A devotee prays to the Lord in this way:

*“yuvatīnām yathā yūni yunām ca yuvatau yathā
mono’bhiramate yadvat mano’bhiramatām tvayi.”*

(Padma Purāṇa)

“Just as the minds of young girls are attracted to young men, and youths are attracted to fair maidens, may my mind be similarly attracted to You.”

Such desiring for the Lord will result in getting Him. The act of desiring itself is always there—it a function accompanying the living entity eternally. The *jīva* cannot live for a moment without desiring something. The *jīva* whose self-conception is erroneous and covered by nescience employs his desiring function for material sense objects. This kind of desiring is called “lust” (*kāma*). If and when, by some great fortune, that desiring propensity is utilized for the service of the Lord then it is glorified as *prem* or the unqualified *bhāgavatī-vṛtti*.

Kāma, or desire for the sense objects is the cause of being trapped in the whirlpool of material existence and the desire to attain the Lord or *prem* is the only means for remaining eternally immersed in the boundless depths of the ocean of *paramāṇḍa* or transcendental happiness.

*"ata eb kāme preme bohu to antar
kāma andha-tomo prem nirmol bhāskor."* (CC ādi 4.147)

"Therefore there is great difference between *kāma* and *prema*—one is the deepest darkness of ignorance and the other is an unblemished golden sun."

Until one's desiring propensity reaches fullness there is no obtention of the desired result. The way we wish to attain wealth and possessions is called honestly or completely desiring. When such desire is awakened for the Lord then that is called *prem*, and with the dawning of such *prem* the direct association of the Lord is soon forthcoming. He who has not attained union with God should be understood to be incomplete in his desiring. There is no other reason for not attaining the Lord than a lack or imperfection of desire. Thus it is certain that anyone who has not attained the Lord has not desired for Him adequately.

Perhaps some persons will not be able to accept that they themselves don't want the Lord or at least it may be difficult for them to accept that those practitioners of devotional activities and fortunate persons who have taken up a life of renunciation and are seen to show great amounts of feeling and anxiousness for the Lord also have no desire to attain Him. In this case it must be said that it is not that they are completely lacking desire in the way of the gross materialists, but as long as they are unable to

transcend the stage of practice they will have some “lack of desire” mixed with their desire. One can understand that there is darkness mixed in the light of a thousand watt light bulb as soon as a two thousand watt bulb is lit. Similarly that the devotee who has not attained the Lord has some “non-desire” mixed in with his desire can be perceived by him as soon as his eagerness to attain Him is elevated to an even higher stage. The scriptures describe the progressive evolution in the development of prem in the following way:

*“ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-sango’tha bhajana-kriyā,
tato’ nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā tathā ruciḥ
tathāsaktis tato bhāvas tataḥ premābhudañcati
sādhākānām ayaṁ premnah prādurbhāvo
bhavet kramah.”*

(BRS.1.4.15-16)

“First comes faith, then the association of devotees, then the practice of devotional activities and then the termination of sinful activities and inclinations. After that comes conviction and determination, followed by attachment and actual liking or taste. Then one experiences emotions (bhāva) and finally *prem* (love of God). These are the progressive stages in the development of *prem* by the performer of devotional activities in practice. (*sādhana-bhakti*).”

This scriptural description of the evolution of *prem* is actually a description of the development of the

devotee's uncompromising desire for the Lord. The beginning of wanting the Lord is faith (*śraddhā*) which gradually develops into *prem* which is its perfection (From this point also there are development of *prem* through *sneha*, *māna*, *pranaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, *bhāva* and *mahābhāva* for an understanding of which we refer the interested reader to Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī's "*Ujjvala Nīlamanī*.") The meaning of the word *prema* or love of God is to want Him single-mindedly and completely whole-heartedly. Therefore we say that until the devotee develops in his practice (*sādhana*) to the point of *prem*, there is always an element of apathy, however slight, mixed in with his devotional desire. Thus, according to the proportion of one's desire to attain Him, the Lord comes closer to His devotee, and in accordance to his apathy remains distant from him. The more a devotee wants Him, the closer he is to the level of desiring Him completely, or *prem*, that is how close he is to getting direct vision of the Lord. We minute a practitioner (*sādhaka*) attains complete desire for the Lord, giving up any vestiges of apathy whatsoever, when that indifference to the Lord no longer lurks somewhere in the background, then—"tataḥ *premā bhyudañcati*"—that desire appears as the rising sun of *prem*. Just as the rising sun reveals the world around us, so the rising sun of love for Krishna reveals Him.

So in this way we have understood that the Supreme Lord is actually quite accessible, but because

we don't really want Him He becomes unattainable to us.

The reflection of an object in a mirror looks exactly the same as the original object but simply in reverse. That which is actually on the left side appears on the right side of the image and vice-versa. The world which is averse to the Lord is similarly like a reflection and has the same type of inverted relationship with the reality of the mood of introversion or devotion to the Lord.

Every materialist constantly desires for sense objects; he desires the sense objects but generally they deny him. Sometimes, someone may obtain them, but for the most part, even though one wants them fully and whole-heartedly, still they have to be refused by the illusory and temporary sense objects. In the same way that dogs return again and again in the hope of getting foodstuffs from the sacrificial arena, no matter how many times they are beaten and driven away, so the living beings who are blinded by illusion cannot give up their desires for the material sense objects even though they are again and again foiled in the attempt to get them.

Therefore, even though the *jīva* in material bondage naturally and instinctively desires for the sense objects, still it is very difficult for him to attain them to his full satisfaction because of their destructible nature. God is very easy to attain because simply desiring for Him one can get Him—but to desire Him

is the difficulty. The desire for sense objects, on the other hand, is very easily attainable—even the most insignificant worms can and do desire for sense objects. How much value, then, can a function possibly have if it is seen even in the worms? It is worthy only of being referred to as the deepest darkness of *kāma* or lust. On the other hand again, the desire for the Supreme Lord is extremely rare, it cannot even be found easily amongst the demigods. For this reason this desire or *prem* has been compared to the lustrous and pure sun-globe. It is the most rare thing in the entire planetary system. If by the great fortune of the association of the Lord's devotee one should get a desire, then he will very quickly and easily attain the Lord.

Therefore we say that the Lord is a very easily attainable item. Something that can be had just by wanting it must be called easily available. We pray for sense objects and even then we are generally deprived of them, yet if we could pray for the Lord in that way we would certainly get Him. Anyone who ingenuously desires for Him will never be deprived, but alas, what a pity that we have kept such a great and easily available prize inaccessible simply by not wanting it. Can there be any greater trick played on us by ignorance?

There is no practice by which one attains the Lord. The only unfailing means to capture Him is to want Him, but because such a desire is so rare, whatever

practice or culture of devotional activities is seen should be understood to be a culture of that desire without which one cannot realize Him. All processes of devotional culture and practice (*bhajan*, *sādhana*) are simply means to awaken that desire for Him in the *jīva*'s heart—so that the life force will cry out for Him as the supreme object of attainment just as it now cries for material sense objects. The devotee prays, “Oh Lord, please give that same drive, that same desire that the materialist have for attaining the sense objects only for attaining You.”

“yā prītir avivekānām viṣayesu amāpayini

tvām anusmarataḥ sā me hṛdayān ŋc apararpatu.”

(V.P. 1.20.19)

When the heart spontaneously cries out to attain the service of the Lord, that is called *prem*. The spontaneous desire to attain Him is called *prem*. As soon as *prem* appears in the heart of the devotee then the direct personal meeting with the Lord immediately takes place. For this reason the spiritual masters of the *Goudīya Vaiṣṇava* school, who are like bees at the lotus feet of Śrī Gourāṅga and dedicated to the welfare of the living beings in general, have not said that God is the ultimate goal of life but have announced that love for Him is the goal, without which the *jīva* can never attain the highest platform of self-realization.

That thing which can be obtained simply by want-

ing it remains unobtained only by that sick and dying invalid who is too weak to desire it due to his affliction. In the same way, the Supreme Lord, the supreme form of ecstasy, can be attained simply by desiring for Him, but the poor *jīva* is so indisposed by his material disease that he hasn't even got the strength to desire for the desire to get Him. This incredible weakness of heart is the cause of the *jīva*'s not wanting and therefore not getting Krishna. This debility of the living entity is the main obstacle in his attaining the Supreme Truth, *Paramātmā*. Therefore the *Śruti* has said, "*nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyaḥ*" (*Mund.* 3.2.4) "The Supreme truth or Supersoul cannot be attained by a *jīva* who is weak of heart." What is the cause of such debility and complete deterioration of the *jīva*'s strength? That should be investigated.

Due to being blinded by ignorance the living beings have become confused about their actual self-identity and think the body to be the self. Thus in order to satisfy that false self they work tirelessly, birth after birth, for the fostering and nourishment of that body and mind as a result of which it has become very strong. On the other hand, the *jīva* has forgotten his real identity and thus the soul has become deprived of his spiritual food and recreation, and therefore he is weak and listless. For the *jīva* who has forgotten his spiritual identity it is quite natural that he should be ignorant of its nature and work-

ings. Because we are unacquainted with the nature of the soul, when we hear and even when we are able to comprehend that all our tireless endeavours to satisfy the spirit self with material objects will only result in the strengthening of the body and senses and that because of there being of a different nature they will never be able to satisfy or nourish the soul—we still don't really understand. While endeavouring to satisfy and nourish the self we have actually kept him perpetually fasting and infirm. This is nothing other than a trick of ignorance. The natural diet of the soul is devotional service which of a nature congenious to his. Other than the ambrosia of loving service to the Lord there is no other food and drink that is capable of fostering the soul and giving it strength. The *chālak* bird remains always thirsty, pining on account of lack of drink as he waits for even a single drop of water from the clouds which gather in the vast blue sky, yet he will not take water from another source, even though there are many reservoirs of water, lakes and rivers everywhere. In the same way, there is not a bit of doubt that the soul is bound to remain forever thirsty, forever unnourished until it gets a little nectar from the devotional clouds in the Krishna sky. Due to the soul's aggravated condition of weakness it is not able to express or reveal clearly his hunger and thirst. The best evidence that he has become weakened is that he has no strength to desire for the Lord. This inability to want the Lord

because of weakness is the main cause for the *jīva*'s finding the Supreme Lord "hard to get."

The intense hankering for the Lord is otherwise known as *prem-bhakti*. The desire to obtain the Lord or love Him in devotion is made possibly by taking the reviving tonic of *sādhana-bhakti* or devotional service in practice. Just as the gross body and senses are the transformation of the material foodstuffs that we eat, so similarly the essence of the strength to desire for the Lord or *prema-bhakti* is the transformation of the practice of unqualified pure devotional service. The beginning stage of hearing, chanting, remembering etc., i.e. all mental, verbal or physical activities which are performed favourably in connection with the Lord, is called *sādhana-bhakti* or devotional service in practice. By getting the right type of spiritual foodstuffs the infirm soul gradually gains strength to desire for the Lord, which as soon as he does, i.e. as soon as he develops *prem*, then He immediately experiences direct contact with the supreme ecstatic topmost form of the Absolute Truth. Not only has the *jīva* become so weak that he is unable to desire for the Supreme, but he has no ability or inclination to even desire, or develop an interest in the diet by taking which he will develop such a desire, namely *sādhana-bhakti*. Because the *jīva* has no strength due to material bondage, his vital energy is practically exhausted, and therefore he has no ability to desire for any spiritual thing at all. If at any time any effort to

attain spiritual things is seen in the *jīva* it should be known that his real *jīva*hood is being manifest and the cry of despair and untiring effort for material sense objects should be understood as the shout of the hungry body and senses. Because the thin sound of the fasting and debilitated soul cannot be heard over the noise of the material nature we mistake the shouting of the body and senses to be the called of the self and so we take it that nourishing and pleasing the senses means to satisfy the soul, but actually this is nothing other than the deception of nescience.

The spiritual substance is without material qualities (*nirguṇa*) and is self-manifesting. If it did not voluntarily allow itself to become subject to the senses, if it didn't allow itself to be captured by them, by its own mercy, it would never be possible for the material senses to take them up. Even though a breast-feeding infant has no ability to ask on its own, when it shows the slightest inclination for drinking milk then its compassionate mother immediately comes forward and gives the nipple for it to suck. In the same way, although the *jīva* himself has no capacity to take up the practice of the purely spiritual process of devotional service, still when he displays even the slightest amount of desire to do so, then *bhakti* comes and allows herself to become subject to his material senses. Therefore the devotional scriptures have glorified the mercy of *bhakti* as follows:

*“ataṅ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaḥ
sevonmukhe hi jīhvādaḥ svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ.”*
(BRS. 1.2.234)

“Because the material senses such as the tongue and ears have no power of their own to perceive unqualified (*nirguṇa*) devotional service in the form of hearing, chanting and remembering Krishna’s names, qualities and pastimes etc. and yet because there is no other way to become free from the material entanglement without her help and accompaniment, even though the *jīva* has practically no ability to even ask for it due to infirmity, if he just shows the slightest amount of inclination for such practices, then the self-manifesting *sādhana-bhakti* appears out of her own desire on his material senses.”

Even though the Lord has shown such great compassion through the goddess of devotion, *Bhakti-devī*, to pick the unconscious *jīva* out from behind the conglomeration of material energy and reestablish him in his constitutional position, the misfortune of the living entity spreads to such an extent that the waves of Krishna’s mercy are not even able to cross such vast desert-like expanses to reach him, for even though *Bhakti-devī* is waiting to appear on his material senses in the form of hearing and chanting etc., the poor *jīva* doesn’t even have sufficient energy to show the slightest amount of inclination towards her at all.

Just as a dead body is not only devoid of the strength to ask for foodstuffs but hasn't got any life whatsoever to display the slightest amount of inclination for them, so similarly, due to being bound in the ropes of illusion since time immemorial the *jīva* has become so swallowed up in matter, so devoid of any strength whatsoever that there is no possibility of awakening the tendency to take his natural and revivifying foodstuffs of *sādhana-bhakti*. Even a person who is very critically injured and on the point of death still bears some symptoms of life, therefore if the living entity had simply been wounded by the material energy, then perhaps he could have possibly had some inclination towards devotional practice, but he is not simply wounded or on the point of death, he has been completely killed by *Māyā*. As a result there is no possibility of his showing any inclination for devotional service at all. Thus the misfortune of the *jīva* "killed" by *Māyā* is so boundless that it stretches beyond the limits of *Bhakti's* great compassion.

The *jīva* is a spiritual substance and hence he is free from material qualities and is transcendental to matter. Those things which are free from material qualities naturally display correspondingly unqualified (*nirguṇa*) workings and the materially qualified substance (*saguṇa*) will show the workings which correspond to matter. Whenever one unqualified (i.e. free from material qualities of goodness passion and

ignorance) or non-material mood is displayed by the *jīva* then that should be recognized as a function of the spirit soul itself and when there is a materialistic or qualified spirit that should be understood as the working of the unconscious or dull matter. Ignorance or illusion (*Māyā*) completely overwhelms the spark of consciousness, the *jīva*, and by means of his conscious energy gives all the body and senses and other material objects the appearance of consciousness also, but because they are filled with the material qualities they always display the symptoms of dull matter or illusion. The eternal unqualified nature or pure spiritual function of the *jīva* has disappeared due to his falsely identifying with matter after *Māyā* has made him forget his spiritual identity. The spiritual *jīva* is an eternal substance who is immortal and can therefore never die. In no circumstance can the living entity be destroyed, but that *jīva* whose *jīva*-ness has been taken away by the illusory energy of *Māyā* and thus no longer functions in his constitutional position is called *Māyā-hata* or "killed by *Māyā*." Actually, the meaning of the term *Māyā-hata-jīva* is not that the *jīva*'s existence has been fully terminated by the material nature or killed but that his *jīva*-ness has been killed by his falsely applying the conception of self to matter which is lifeless. To sum up, one should know that a *māyā-hata-jīva* is one who has lost his sense of spiritual identity. The material energy takes on the appearance of having consciousness in the way of

hunger and thirst and the conscious *jīva* takes on the qualities of unconscious matter in the way of bodily conception. Such a reversal of natures would ordinarily be impossible, but the inconceivable potency of the Lord is expert in making the impossible take place.

All activities that are manifested by the body and senses arise as a consequence of the identification of the self with the material body and his resultant distorted consciousness. All these should be known as the workings of matter or the qualified nature. The dead body burns in the blazing sun, is dried by the wind, bloated by the water and blow about by the storm, carried off by the current and tossed by the waves, but all this activity does not mean that he is not dead. In the same way, all the desires and activities of the *jīva* whose intelligence has been covered over by ignorance and matter, whatever material thoughts, feelings and endeavours are displayed by him, all are the workings of matter only, just like the movements of the dead body. It is essential to understand that whatever bodily, mental or verbal activities other than those which are positively for the satisfaction of the Lord, i.e. devotional service, are all functions of the of the material energy and are not different from death.

The qualified nature or world in which we live is material and its movements are the workings of matter. *Bhakti* is *nirguṇa*, it has no material qualities.

Therefore, other than the devotional service of the Lord there is no other activity by which the *jīva* can show the symptoms of life or his spiritual nature. A powerful emperor may be equipped with indomitable enthusiasm to conquer his enemies, a rising young man may have tireless enterprise or another person may lie unemployed in some corner of a thatched cottage wasting his life in slothfulness and sleep, wherever there is an absence of the attitude of devotion to the Lord, all activities are nothing other than devoidness of consciousness or death, there is no trace of the actual spiritual qualities of the soul. To the extent which the pure unqualified devotional nature appears in a *jīva*, that is the extent to which his actual constitutional nature and "symptoms of life" will be displayed. The qualities of laziness and so on are produced of the material mode of ignorance. Better than this is the enthusiastic dedication to activities that are born of the mode of passion and the qualities of non-violence and self-sacrifice which belong to the mode of goodness are considered to be better, but even so all these modes and their qualities are devoid of consciousness by definition. Thus the life symptoms of the *jīva*, who is beyond these modes cannot be manifested simply by the mode of goodness. Because devotional service is free from all material qualities (*nirguṇa*), due to being closer or further to this uncontaminated nature the mode of goodness (*sattva-guṇa*), is considered better than the

modes of passion (*rajo-guṇa*) and ignorance (*tamo-guṇa*), and the mode of ignorance is considered to be inferior to the modes of goodness and passion. Because the mode of goodness (*sattva-guṇa*) is symptomized by the quality of enlightenment it is closer to the non-qualified nature and is therefore is seen to be more highly respected than the other two qualities, otherwise all the qualities are completely material and devoid of conscious energy. Therefore the manifestation of these three qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are all manifestations of matter.

Because the absence of consciousness is synonymous with death, those *jīvas* who are engaged in material activities are called *karma-jāḍa* (*karma*—activity; *jāḍa*—dull, unconscious or material.) The purport of this word *karma-jāḍa* is that non of the activities of the *jīva* who has been “killed by *Māyā*” are the slightest bit symptomatic of his real *jīva*-hood—they are nothing more than a type of unconsciousness or death just like the activities of a corpse. The corpse lying in may sometimes move a hand or leg, laugh or cry, let out a sigh, sometimes it opens its mouth or chews on soaked grams, or makes efforts to sit, still it is nothing more than a dead body.*

* This is a reference to the practices of *tantra-sādhakas* who meditate while sitting on a dead body. The energy which is generated passes like electric current into the body producing the abovementioned effects. Due to the unrest of the body-seat, the *sādhaka* may sometimes feed it soaked chick-peas to keep it occupied and quiet.

Due to ignorance we only call that body which does not breathe and is motionless and silent like a corpse, but we should know that if activity can be observed in even a dead body, then the desires and diversions and other materially qualified activities springing from the body are not sufficient to take away the unconsciousness or lifelessness of the *jīva*. If the *nirguṇa-bhakti* is not displayed in the least, then to whatever extent someone may attain success in his material and worldly endeavours or however dedicated to those endeavours he may be, however worthy or illustrious he may be, however enthusiastic and enterprising he may be, the *śhāstras* have described him as nothing more than an active corpse, a lifeless entity known as *karma-jāḍa*. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* announces in a resonant voice :

*“bīle batorukrama-vikramam ye na śṛṇvataḥ karṇa-
pūte narasya,*

*jihvāsati dardūrikeva sūta na copagāyaty yrugāya-
gāthāḥ.*

*bhārah param paṭṭa-kirīṭa-juṣṭam apy uttamāṅgam na
namen mukundaṁ,*

*śavau karau no kurute saparyām harer lasat kāñcana-
kankanau vā.*

*barhāyite te nayane narānām lingāni viṣṇor na
nirīkṣato ye*

*pāḍau nṛṇām tau druma-jaṇma-bhājau kṣetrāṇi
nānuvrajato harer yau*

*jī vāñ chavo bhāgavatanghri-raṇūn na jātu matyo'
bhīlabheta yas tu*

*śrī-viṣṇu-pādyāṁ manujas tulasyāḥ śvasaṅ-chavo yas
tu na veda gandham.*" (SB. 2.3.20—23)

"Alas! The ears of that person who never hears the name and qualities of the Supreme Lord are like useless holes only, and the tongue which never glorifies those attributes is unchaste or fallen, it is like the tongue of a frog. Even that head which is decorated with a silken turban and adorned with jewels and pearls is just a heavy burden if it never bows down at the Lord's lotus feet, and even those hands that are decorated with golden bracelets are like the hands of a corpse if they are never engaged in the service of the Lord. Those eyes which never gaze on the worshipable form of the Lord are equal to the eyes stamped on the tail feathers of a peacock and the legs which do not walk to the temples of the Lord are like a tree. (Therefore the body is also unconscious and dull like a trees). That human body which has never been sprinkled with the dust of a devotee's feet is dead, even though it may show so many symptoms of life and that person who has never smelt the fragrance of the *tulasī* leaves offered to the Lord's lotus feet is nothing more than a dead body, though breathing."

When the new buds a leaves sprout and new grasses spread their green carpet over the breast of the Earth

and the dry and dusty look of the leafless and flowerless winter is cleared away, then one can understand that spring has arrived. In the same way, we can understand that as soon as the *nirguṇa bhāgavati-ṛtti* or unqualified and pure spiritual function of devotional service is observed in the *jīva* in the place of lifeless material activities born of his unconscious body, mind, intelligence and senses, then that *jīva* has finally started displaying the symptoms of life and immortality after lying insensate in the material refuse pile for so many years. The *jīvas* reanimation after being "killed by *Māyā*" since time immemorial is described in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as follows :

*"sā vāg yayā tasya guṇān gṛhite,
karan ca tat karma karma manaś ca
smared vasantam sthira-jaṅgameṣu
śṛnoti tat-puṇya-kathāḥ sa kamaḥ
śīras tu taśyobhaya-liṅgam ānamet
ted eva yat paśyati tad hi cakṣuḥ
aṅgāni viṣṇor atha taj-jaṇānām
padodakam yāni bhajanti nityam."* (10.80.3-4)

"That speech which is used to glorify the name and qualities of the Supreme Lord is actual speech that hand which is used to do the work of the Lord is a real hand; that mind which remembers the Lord in all existences moving and unmoving can factually be called a mind. That ear which hears the pious talks of the Lord is a genuine ear; that head which bows down to all living entities seeing them and manifest-

tations of the Lord's majesty is a real head; that eyes which sees the Lord everywhere is a real eye and that body which has been anointed by the water from the devotee's foot-bath is a real, living body."

The bodily, mental or verbal activities of the *jīva* which are in relation to the Lord and favorable to Him are the best evidence that he is alive. Full, devotion is full *jīva-hood* or life, therefore the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam has described the character of Mahārāj Ambarīṣh as an example of such a *jīva* who is fully *ālm*.

*"sā vai manah kṛṣṇa padāravindayoḥ
vācāmsi vaikunṭha-guṇānuvarṇane
karau tan-mandira-marjanādiṣu
śrutiṁ cakārācyuta sat-kathodaye
mukunda-lingālaya-darśane dṛṣṭau
tad bhr̥tya-gātra-sparśe' űga saṅgamam
ghr̥ṇam ch tat-pāda-saroja-saurabhe
śrīmat-tulasyā rasanām tad-arpite
pādaḥ hareḥ ksetra- padānusaṛpane
śīrau hr̥ṣīkeśa-padābhivandane
kāmaṁ ca dāsyē na tu kama-kāmyayā
yathottama-śloka-janāśrayā ratih*

(SB. 9.4.18—20)

"The great personality Ambarīṣh Mahārāj engaged his mind in always meditating on Krishna's lotus feet, his power of speech in glorifying His qualities, his hands in cleaning the temple and his ears in hearing

the topics of the Lord. He engaged his sense of sight in looking at the deity form of the Lord and his body in touching the devotees of the Lord, his nose was used to smell the *tulasī* offered to the Lord's lotus feet. He engaged his tongue in tasting the remnants of foodstuffs offered to the Lord and his head in bowing down at His feet. He never used his desiring propensity for material sense gratification but for the service of the Lord and all of his activities were done in such a way that the devotees would be pleased."

From the above description of the scriptures we can understand that the *jīva*'s consciousness or unconsciousness, his lifelessness or immortality can be recognized by the symptoms of the appearance or non-appearance of a relation with the Supreme Lord and devotion to Him. Just as in our ordinary day-to-day conception of life, as soon as a piece of cotton held close to a suspected corpse's nose or mouth shows even the slightest motion due to his breathing then he is no longer treated as if dead, so too as soon as even the slightest symptoms of devotion are seen, then even though he was "dead" or "killed by *Māyā*," he should now be understood as having been brought back to life. The symptoms of life of the "killed" soul can be seen in the Display of pure devotion, there is a corresponding manifestation of his *jīva*-hood. There is no restriction to thinking that he is alive if there is seen the slightest connection with devotion.

It is well known that the Lord of Death, *Yamarāj*, has authority over the dead and not over the living. When a person is considered to be living when he has even the slightest connection with devotion to the Supreme Lord or displays even the most insignificant of favorable activities, verbal, mental or physical, then it should be known that as soon as such symptoms of life are seen then he is free from the jurisdiction of *Yamarāj*. The *jīva* is dead as long as he has no connection with devotion. The *jīva* devoid of the symptoms of connection to his constitutional identity is known as a "dead soul". Other than such a dead soul, any resurrected or constitutionally situated living entity is outside the authority of the Lord of Death. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* it is seen in connection with the story of Ajāmila's rescue that *Yamarāj* gave his messengers the order to bring to his fearful residence only those *jīvas* who never displayed even a single symptom of devotion to the Lord or even the slightest connection with it.

*"jīhvā na vakti bhagavad-guṇa-nāma-dheyam
celceś ca na smarati tac-caranāravindam,
kṛṣṇa no namati yac-chira ekadāpi
tān ānayadhvam asato 'kṛta-viṣṇu-kṛtyam."* (6.3.29)

"Oh my messengers! Those sinful rascals who are completely bereft of devotion, whose tongues have never once uttered the name or qualities of the Supreme Lord, whose minds have never once remem-

bered His lotus feet and whose heads have never bowed down even once to Him should be brought to me for punishment.”

In this verse, the word *ekadāpi* or ‘even only once’ is to be understood as applying throughout. It should be known also that the reference to the tongue, mind and heads respective engagement in *kīrtan*, remembrance and the paying of obeisances is indicative of the slightest amount of engagement is any verbal, mental or bodily activity in a spirit favorable to the pleasure of the Lord.

In conclusion, the essence of this discussion of the “lifelessness” and immortality of the soul has been described nicely in a passage from the nectarean writings of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. We have quoted from his *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita* here:

“Those eyes which have never looked upon Krishna’s face, the abode of the flute song, the birth place of immortal loveliness, then what is the use of them? Why should they remain in existence? A thunderbolt should fall upon them.

“Listen, my friend, to the unfortunate words of this condemned one. All my senses, my body, mind and heart are all useless without Krishna.

“Krishna’s sweet words are like a rippling river of ambrosia; those ears into which that river has never flowed are like the holes in a tiny seashell, they were created without any purpose.

The fragrance of Krishna’s body steals away the

pride of the aroma of musik mixed with the blue lotus flower. That nose which has never had any connection to such a fragrance is equal to the blacksmith's bellows.

"The tongue which has never tasted the remnants of Krishna's foodstuffs, more tasty than the essence of the nectar of the Gods is like the tongue of a frog. Being born, why didn't it simply die immediately?

The touch of Krishna's feet and hands is as cooling as millions of moons. Their touch is like that of a touchstone. That body which has never had contact with those hands and feet may as well be destroyed immediately for it is no better than a lump of stone." (*C.C.Madhya* 2.26—31)

So we have been able to understand that the living entity's actual life becomes manifested only after he comes into contact with devotion to the Lord and when he does, then all of his senses, body, mind, life and intelligence all attain fulfilment, and if not, they remain useless. All activities or spiritual practices like *jñāna* and *yoga*, austerities and cultivation of knowledge are worthwhile only when *bhakti* is added to them, otherwise they are all dry and without any heart and are thus not worthy of faith. Just as a dead person cannot show any inclination to take medicine, so similarly the *jīva* who has been "Killed by *Māyā*" cannot show any inclination to take the nectar of hearing and chanting the Lord's names and activities, etc. or any other form of devotional practice

which are the only means for him to be resuscitated. How this is possible will be discussed in the last division of this essay.

111 THE MEANS

(*Ābhidheya-prakaraṇam*)

There is hope of curing even the most debilitated patient, even if he is unable to speak or move after being critically injured and is almost dead if there is some possibility of getting him interested in taking his medicine. If that is possible then there is some value in attending him in the hopes of giving him the proper medicine and diet by which he will be restored to a strong and healthy state, otherwise, if he is dead, then there is no possibility of him ever showing any interest in taking medication and therefore it is seen that when he reaches that state even the most close and compassionate relatives and friends leave him.

Because the *jīva*'s true identity has been killed by illusion then he is, for all intents and purposes, dead. Therefore there is no possibility of his making an autonomous effort to take his medicine of *sādhana-bhakti*, nor can *bhakti* herself come and keep her vow to appear even on the material senses wherever there

is the slightest desire for her—the *jīva* “killed by *Māyā*” cannot take advantage of her great mercy on him. This is because, even though he may be active like the *tāntrik*’s corpse, still there is no possibility of his showing the symptoms of life in the way of hearing and chanting and other forms of *sādhana-bhakti*, because he has no capability of desiring, even faintly, for *Bhakti*’s mercy and thus she cannot manifest herself on his senses. In this way, even though it seems that the misfortune of the *jīva* has exceeded the limits of the Lord’s mercy, the mercy of the Lord is unlimited. In this condition of life (“death”) the closest and most affectionate relatives of a man abandon him, but the mercy of the Lord towards the *jīva* who has fallen into the lifeless condition at the hands of *Māyā* does not wane in the way that the mercy of the materialistic kinsmen does. Seeing that there is no possibility of the *jīva*’s showing any inclination whatsoever to the taking of medications, He could completely abandon him in the way that his material friends, etc. did, but the infinite rays of the Lord’s mercy are so bright that even though the adversity suffered by the *jīva* is expanded so endlessly, those rays overtake the darkness of his misfortune and catch him up in their compassionate net of light. The Lord does not give up when He sees the *jīva* has been “killed” by *Māyā*. He first resuscitates him with the use of *mṛita-sanjīvanī*, “the life giving tonic”, then making him capable and desirous of taking his medicine of

sādhana-bhakti and gradually creates within him the hankering for the mature stage of the *sādhana bhakti* treatment, namely the service of the Lord or *prem bhakti*. In this way He gives the lifeless soul eternal life and takes him to his very heart.

Even though there are myths that "*mṛita-sanjīvanī*" or life-giving tonics can revive the dead in this world, it is not seen practically, and even if it should be seen, because the life of the body is not the real life, that is not the real *mṛita-sanjīvanī*. Its effect is to simply revive the unnatural bodily activities temporarily, but that *mṛita-sanjīvanī* which restores the *jīva* to his actual constitutional life and by whose touch the *jīva*'s lost life is restored with unbounded and endless sweetness is called *mahat-kṛpā*—the mercy of great personalities i.e. great devotees.

The natural flow of the *jīva*'s life starts as soon as he gets even a trace of contact of the mercy of a great devotee. This can only occur after some inexpressibly great fortune. With the arising of the living entity's *jīva*-hood or spirituality—his life symptoms, so to speak—the immediate inclination to engage in the process of *sādhana-bhakti* appears. This inclination to activities or natural liveliness can be called *puruṣh-kār* or determination. The enthusiasm and firm dedication to gain the material items like wealth, possessions, prestige and influence, etc. is not conducive to the pure unqualified nature of the soul, and so even though such unnatural animation is called

puruṣhkār or determination or strength in the material world, it is not actually worthy of the name. We shall call it spiritual strength. The word *puruṣh* means, literally, "*puruṣa śete ya iti puruṣaḥ*" —he who resides (lies) in the city (*pur*) of the gross and subtle bodies, therefore the transcendental spiritual entity is the *puruṣh*. The endeavour of the *puruṣh* can be called *puruṣh-kār*. The soul is the *puruṣh*, therefore the efforts of the pure soul to attain the unqualified spiritual substance with his body mind and words can actually be called *puruṣhkār*. The unnatural efforts made by the *jīva* who is under the influence of ignorance to attain the materially qualified sense objects are also material and have no relation at all to the Supreme Lord. It is not logical to call the impetus to activities which are just meant for increasing the body and senses "*puruṣhkār*". The mistake at the very root of all, the misidentification with the body, makes all the unnatural efforts for developing the body also fully erroneous. After getting the unfailing touch of the life giving elixir of *mahat kṛpā*, the first real symptoms of revival are seen and then the "*Māyā-killed*" *jīva* is able to show some proclivity for medicine taking. As soon as this proclivity, the real *puruṣh-kār*, of the *jīva* is awakened, then *Bhakti*, according to her pledge, voluntarily appears personally on the senses in the form of hearing and chanting, etc. By serving *Bhakti* in this way, the *jīva* gradually develops a full hankering for the direct service of the Lord and as

soon as this *prem* is awakened the *jīva* experiences his “great union” with the Lord. One should know that only the mercy of a great personality (*mahat-kṛpā*) can be the cause of the inclination to engage in the practice of devotion. “*mahat-kṛpā binā kono karme bhakti nay.*” (C.C.M.22) “Without the mercy of great personalities, there is no possibility of devotion’s being present in any activity.”

In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, the great personality Bharat describes how the Supreme Truth known as Bhagavān can only be realized by the devotion born of the mercy of great saintly persons.

“*rahūganaitat tapasā na yāti, na cījyayā nirvapanād
grhād vā,*

*na cchandāsā naiva jalāgni-śuryair vinā mahat-pāda-
rajo’bhiṣekam*” (5.12.12)

“Oh Rahūgana! Without being bathed in the grace of the great devotees, all other processes such as austerities, fruitive religious rituals, performance of prescribed duties, charity or welfare activities, study of the *Vedas* or worship of the demigods are all worthless in helping one to attain the Supreme Truth.”

Without the application of the elixir of *mahat-kṛpā* there is no way that the *jīva* by himself, by any effort of his own, be able to touch even the dust of the feet of the self-manifesting and eternally blissful spiritual potency known as *bhakti*. Wherever the practices of unqualified devotional service in the form of

śravaṇam, *kīrtanam*, etc. are engaged in, one should take it for a fact that, knowingly or unknowingly, in this life or in previous lives, the grace of a great devotee has been showered there.

As soon as any *jīva* gets even a drop of *mahat-kṛpā*, then from that time on he should not be considered as one of the dead, even though he remains behind the heaps of refuse in the material world or world of the dead. However slight his breath may be at that time one can be sure that he has returned to the realm of the living. In a body of water, one fish is swimming freely and another who has been hooked is similarly swimming around, but the one who has been hooked will sooner or later have to leave the water. Even though he is swimming back and forth surrounded by his relatives, it is a fact that he has been caught. In the same way, when a *jīva* is pierced by the hook of *mahat-kṛpā*, then even though he may appear to be in the same situation as so many other living entities swimming in the ocean of material life, sooner or later he will surely be extricated. His movements and activities may seem at first glance to be almost exactly the same as those of a *jīva* who has never received such grace, but the one who has gotten *mahat-kṛpā* should be understood as having been caught by the divine angler. Thus, if one sees someone engaged in the practices of *śravaṇam* (hearing) and *kīrtanam* (glorification, chanting) or any other process of devotional service, which can only appear

as a result of the grace of highly advanced devotees, then even if there are no other symptoms of his liberation from the material bondage, it should be known that his ultimate attainment of the Lord's lotus feet is inevitable. Being conscious of his great fortune, the scriptures have not refrained from giving such as a *jīva* due respect over and over again.

*"parihāsopahāsadyair viśnor grhṇanti nāma ye
kṛtārthās te'pi manujās tebhyo'piha namo namaḥ"*

(Nārāyaṇ Vyūha Stava)

Those who mimicking or jokingly vibrate the holy name of the Lord are fulfilled. Therefore I offer obeisances to them again and again."

There is only one obstacle to the progressive journey of the *jīva* who has taken bath in the mercy of the great devotees, and being liberated from the rubbish heap of matter have started on their way to their eternal life in the homeland, ever cooled by the moon-rays of spiritual beauty—the only one thing potent enough to arrest their movement is called *aparādha*—offences. That which arrests or dampens the spirit of worship (*ārāadhanā*) is called offence (*aparādha*). The poisonous fruits of offences is the backsliding in one's devotional service. Even though these *aparādhās* are divided into two categories, namely *sevāparādha* or offences in serving the Deity and *nāmāparādha* or offences committed in chanting the Holy Name, those offences which are known

as *nāmāparādha* are the most serious in their obstructing the assiduity of the *jīva* for the performance of devotional service in practice (*sāadhan-bhakti*). Of all the *nāmāparādhas* again, the most serious is the offence committed to a devotee or great personality. Because this presents the greatest impediment to spiritual advancement, it is also called the *mahadaparādha*, the greatest offence. The essence of offences is this : when one is unable to maintain an inclination to perform devotional service due to carelessness in the matter of blasphemy, faithlessness and contemptuousness toward the devotees and devotion and maintaining, as far as possible respect and courteousness toward them, then that is called *aparādha*.

If the *jīva* who has been attacked by the snake of *samsāra* (material existence) wants to fearlessly and happily climb up the creeper of devotion, then one can understand how damaging it will be if due to some unawareness he starts chopping at it with an axe even before he starts his climb. If any *jīva* is seen to have any connection at all with pure devotional service, then just as one will inevitably find the mercy of devotees at its root, similarly if after getting such mercy one should experience a strong hindrance to advancement on that gradual path to *prem*, then he should know that the mad elephant of *mahadaparādha* has entered the garden of his heart and is

trampling his devotional creeper. Only the elephant of offences can wreak havoc for the devotional plant, and of all such elephants the mad one known as *mahad-aparādha* or offences to the devotees is the most fearsome.

In one fairy tale, a prince was able to awaken a princess who had been placed in a comatose state by the spell of wicked witch with a silver wand by touching her with another golden wand. When the princess awoke she sat up and rubbing her sleep-laden eyes, she saw the incomparably handsome prince. Being enchanted by his handsome features she surrendered herself to him wholeheartedly. In the same way, the *jīva* has lost his consciousness in the world of matter being cast under the spell of the great sorceress, *Māyā*, who has overpowered him with the touch of her wand of nescience. The Lord, after searching and finding him, awakens him with the golden wand of *mahat-kṛpā* (the mercy of the devotees) and then the *jīva* is able to rise again i.e. he is able to become self-motivated again in spiritual practices. After that he rubs his eyes with the heels of his hands, then he begins the practice of devotional service and all of the coverings of sin are cut away and he immediately is able to see the incomparable beauty of the son of the king of *Vṛndāvan* and he immediately becomes fully attracted to Him, and surrendering himself to His eternally cooling lotus feet he at-

tains complete self-fulfilment and lives happily ever after. Thus to become a devotee is the ultimate perfection of the *jīva*'s spirituality.

The Supreme Lord is the only cause of all causes and therefore the elixir of the devotee's grace is present in this world due to His mercy. Nevertheless, when He, His devotees and devotion all have the same essence, ("*tasmin taj-jane bhedābhāvāt*" NBS 5.41. There is no difference between Him and His devotees.) and yet He has accepted subordination to His devotees. ("*bhakti-vaśaḥ puruṣo*" -*Śruti*—"The Supreme Person is influenced by devotion." "*aham bhakta-parādhīno*" SB. 9.4.53. "I am subordinate to My devotees") then it can be understood that the mercy of the devotees is completely independent. This fully independent devotional grace or *mahad-kṛpā* is the cause of the birth of *bhakti*.

When the *jīva* comes alive by the touch of the elixir of *mahat-kṛpā* and gets the spiritual strength (*puṣa-kāra* or determination) then he alone is able to become motivated to engage in the practice of non-qualified devotional service (*sādhana-bhakti*) and he alone will be able to act in that way, no one else. By the cultivation of *sādhana-bhakti*, the *sādhya* or the goal of the practice can be achieved. At that time a complete and intense hankering to attain the Lord is awakened and in the light of that love, the Supreme Lord can be directly seen. Then the *jīva* finds the highest fulfilment of his life and becomes eternally

satisfied. Just as the same moon is seen to be fully covered, partially covered or completely uncovered, so similarly the same pure spiritual devotional service has three different conditions after being manifested in the heart of the *jīva*. According to whether the consciousness has been fully cleansed, only partially cleansed or uncleansed, *bhakti* manifests in three stages known as *prema-bhakti*, *bhāva-bhakti* and *sādhana-bhakti*.

“sā bhaktiḥ sādhanam bhavaḥ premā ceti tridhositā.”

(BRS. 1.2.1)

“That *bhakti* has three manifestations, namely *sādhana-bhakti* (devotional service in the practice stage), *bhāva-bhakti* (the stage of devotion in feeling) and *prema-bhakti* (devotional service in pure love).”

Even though that single entity of devotion, which is the embodiment of the essence of the spiritual pleasure potency of the Lord and is eternally perfect, is displayed in three separate ways, these are not mutations or transformations of it. Due to the revolution of the Earth, the sun is seen in the different phases as the rising sun, the blazing inferns of mid-day and the blood red ball of sunset, and so too, as the devotional attitude of the *jīva* evolves the devotion itself displayed in different ways. Therefore, because devotion is the cause of the devotion, it remains in its constitutional position, unchanged.

(“*bhaktyā sañjātayā bhaktyā.*” 11.3.32 “By that devotion which is produced of devotions.”)

There is only one devotional service which is *nirguṇa*, free from material qualities which when first manifested as *sādhana-bhakti*, to be served by the *jīva*, she appears in nine ways. In the fifth chapter of the Seventh Canto, Prahlād described the nine-fold divisions of devotional service to his demoniac father Hiranya-kaśhipu.

*“śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam pāda-sevanam
arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyam sakhyam ātma-nivedanam
iti pumsārṇvita visnau bhaktis cen nava lakṣanā”*

(7. 5. 23-24)

“The nine activities which when offered to Him and symptomatic of devotion to Him are hearing, chanting, remembering, serving, worshiping the Deity form, praying, thinking, oneself to be a servant or friend and complete self surrender.”

The essential conclusion of all the discussions of devotional service in practice is *sādhana-bhakti* which are found in the scriptures are found in two stanzas of the *Śrī Chaitanya Charitāmṛta*. There it has been expressed the above-mentioned nine activities are the best means of worshiping the Lord, but because of its being the easiest to take up primarily, its ability to purify the mind and reveal the other processes of devotional service, the taking shelter of the Holy Name is the best amongst them.”

*“bhajaner madhye śreṣṭha nava-vidho bhakti
 kṛṣṇa-prem kṛṣṇa dite dhore mahā śhakti
 ihār madhye sarva-sreṣṭha nām-saṅkīrtan
 niraparādhe loile nām pāy prem dhon”*

(CC Antya 4.65-66)

“Amongst all the practices of devotional service, the nine processes above-listed are the best. This practice of *sādhana-bhakti* is very potent in causing the development of love for God and by that give the direct association and service of the Lord. Amongst all these nine practices, the best is the chanting of the Holy Names of the Supreme Lord. Anyone who takes full shelter of the Holy Name without committing offences is very easily able to attain the greatest wealth of love for Krishna.

Amongst the nine processes described above, the first three, namely hearing, chanting and remembering of the form, name, qualities and pastimes etc., of the Lord were worshipped by the devotees as being the best in the world of *sādhana-bhakti*. Even though the Holy Name is non-different from the Lord, it was respected on an equal far with His form etc., but the source of all incarnations, Who appeared in the Age of Kali as Gourasundar, the father, founder and greatest preacher of the loud chanting of the name of the Lord,—*nāma-saṅkīrtanam*, described the special position of the Holy Name even amongst the other processes and clearly placed it on the throne

amongst them, preaching its superiority to the world.

The progression of the *bhakti* creeper from its root of *mahat-kṛpā* and the association of devotees in the form of hearing and chanting up to the giving of the fruits of *prem* is described as follows.

Bhakti is one undivided and transcendental entity which has three divisions of *sādhana-bhakti*, *bhāva-bhakti* and *prema-bhakti*. *Prema-bhakti* makes its appearance after *bhāva-bhakti* arises out of *sādhana-bhakti*. For the *jīva* who has received the causeless mercy of a *mahat*, the first one to be taken up is *sādhana-bhakti* or devotional service in practice. This can be further divided into two parts namely *bhakti aṅgas* and *sāadhanāṅgas*. The nine practices of hearing, chanting, remembering, serving the lotus feet, worshipping the Deity form, offering prayers, acting as a servant or as a friend and self-surrender are the nine divisions of *bhakti* called the *bhakti-aṅgas* (*bhakti*—devotion and *aṅga*—limb or division). In the beginning stage the practioner of devotional service who has been inspired by a great personality may take up one or more of these processes in a general or unspecific way. That practice which is done without following any particular rules or without any vow, i.e. which is not done in full seriousness as a regular practice and is subject to circumstances can be called the general performance of devotional activities and the opposite can be called the specific practice.

As one practices in such a general way one or more

of these nine processes he advances to the first rung of the devotional ladder which is called "faith" or *śraddhā*. In that stage the *jīva* gradually develops a sincere belief in the Supreme Lord and in worshipping Him. After that he progresses to the stage of *sādhusaṅga* where he seeks out the company of saintly persons, goes to them, associates with them and serves them. He takes instructions from them and becomes enlivened for spiritual life, developing a desire like theirs to engage in *bhajan* or the devotional worship of the Lord. From the point of getting the mercy of a great soul up to the second stage of *sādhusaṅga* the *jīva* can be called a neophyte beginner. After this he starts *bhajana-kriyā* or the actual performance of specific devotional service. At that time, the personification of devotion appears to the *jīva* in her expanded form of the *sādhanāṅgas*. Coming to this stage where the *jīva* begins to practice the different *sādhāṅgas* fully seriously is called *bhajana-kriyā*. There are sixty-four divisions of devotional practices which are known as *sādhanāṅgas* (*sādhana*—practice, *āṅga*—limb or division) beginning from taking shelter of a spiritual master. The first ten of these are the actual start of the serious engagement in *bhajana*. The remaining fifty-four practices along with the first nine above-listed *bhakti-āṅgas* namely, *śravaṇam*—hearing, *kīrtanam*—chanting, *smaraṇam*—remembering, or meditation, *pāda-sevanam*—serving the lotus feet, *vandanam* offering prayers, *arcanam*—

worshipping the Deity form, *dāsyam*—feeling oneself to be the Lord's servitor, *sakhyam*—friendship, *ātma-nivedanam*—total self surrender. When all these are performed in a specific rather than a general way they are called *sādhanāṅgas* also. Thus at this stage the nine division previously described as *bhakti-aṅgas* are now also known as *sādhanāṅgas*. Due to the serious practice of devotional activities at this stage, the various obstacles to devotion are gradually destroyed (*anartha-nivṛtti* and from that point *niṣṭhā* (great determination), *ruci* (taste), *āsakti* (attachment), *bhāva* (intense feeling), and *prema* (love) are developed one after the other. The six stages beginning from *bhajana-kriyā* up to *āsakti* are all included within *sādhana-bhakti*. When one reaches the emotional stage of *bhāva* then that goes by the name of *bhāva-bhakti*, which is the stage after practice. When the practitioner reaches that level then Bhakti-devi causes the appearance of certain external manifestations of his realization. He becomes forbearing, undesirous of wasting even a moment's time, detached from anything other than *bhakti*, free from false pride, full of great hope and eagerness; he develops an affection for chanting the Holy Names constantly, an attachment to discussing the qualities of the Lord and a love for the peace of the Lord's activities, His abode or *dhāma*. Then the ultimate goal of human life, *prema*, makes its appearance in the heart of the devotee. So the development of

the devotional creeper has been briefly described from its root, the first obtention of the mercy of a devotee, up to its fruits of *bhāva* and *prema*.

The creeper of devotion has two characteristics, one is called *rāga-bhakti* or devotional service in spontaneous attraction and *vaidhī-bhakti*—devotional service based on rules and regulations. It also has five moods, namely pacific, serving, friendly, parental and conjugal. That devotion which is motivated by the hankering for Kṛṣṇa's form and qualities, etc. is spontaneous devotion or *rāga-bhakti*, and *vaidhī-bhakti* is that devotion which is prompted by the orders of the scriptures which declare the necessity of performing devotional service as a duty. That devotion which is untouched by any desire for sense enjoyment or liberation and is based entirely on the desire for the pleasure of the Lord and is not mixed with any other practice of *yoga*, *karma*, or *jñāna* can be called pure devotion or *uttamā bhakti*. This pure devotion can also be called unqualified or *nirguṇa bhakti* because it has no connection with the material qualities. This pure devotion's prime fruit is the direct association of the Supreme Lord in His eternal form of bliss and knowledge, surrounded by His potencies and His service.

The practice of devotional service in discussion here can also have its connection with the material modes, if so it is called *saguṇa-bhakti* (qualified devotional service). This *saguṇa-bhakti* can also be divided

into two classes, namely mixed with material desires and unmixed. That devotion which is mixed with material desires is either in the modes of passion or ignorance. Those who perform it are the distressed or economically needy and its fruits are worldly or heavenly sense happiness. If devotion is mixed with desire in the mode of goodness, then because the goal of the practice is the attainment of liberation it is said to be unmixed with desire. Its practitioners are the salvationists. Such devotion which is mixed with the desire for liberation is often performed in combination with the practices of *karma*, *jñāna* or *yoga*. In such cases the practices are called *karma-miśra-bhakti* or devotion mixed with the practice of sacrificial rituals etc., *jñāna-miśra-bhakti*—devotion mixed with the cultivation of impersonal spiritual knowledge and *yoga-miśra-bhakti* or devotion mixed with the practice of the eight-fold yoga system. The result of *karma-miśra-bhakti* is purification of the heart; *jñāna-miśra-bhakti*'s fruit is realization of the impersonal *brahman* by immediate liberation; the end product of *yoga-miśra-bhakti* is realization of the *Paramātmā* feature of the Lord through the progressive liberation path. Thus there are many varieties of *bhakti* according to the mixtures of desires for material enjoyments, liberation and mystic power, the mixture of other practices like *karma*, *yoga* or *jñāna* and they all have different relative values on the absolute scale. On that absolute scale, the supere-

xcellent manifestation of devotional service is that which is practiced by the *gopīs* or cowherd girls of Vrindāvan. Their *bhakti* is based on the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa in His most sweet and intimate aspect, is spontaneous and is of the flavour of conjugal love. This devotion is the fountainhead of all the other countless varieties of devotion. This devotion which is spontaneous, of the sweet and conjugal variety is the most advanced and is distributed in the material world only once in a *kalpa* by the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form of Goursundar Mahāprabhu.

By association and the mercy of a devotee of a particular flavor one develops that same type of mood. What is more, if one gets the association of a more advanced devotee equipped with a deeper spiritual mood, then he can also develop a superior conception.

In the beginning, by practising one or more of the devotional processes in a general way, when the various *sādhanaṅgas* or specific processes are manifested in the due course of time, then by their practice all obstructions on the path are cleared and there is a gradual development of unbending determination which culminates ultimately in the blossoming of the flowers of spiritual feeling and love. This is an abbreviated description of the process of awakening *prem-bhakti*. For this end of developing *prem* all of the nine processes of devotion beginning with *śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam* are potent and regardless of

which one is taken up the same course of development of *prem* will be followed, nevertheless, the process of taking shelter of the Holy Name has been given the place of honour as the best of all by the words “*ihār modhye sarva-śreṣṭha nām sankīrtan*” (C.C) by the incarnation of the Lord in this Age of Kali, Lord Goursundar Himself. Thus if we think a little carefully we will be able to determine the reasons why such acclaim has been given.

Because the name of the Lord and the Lord Himself are non-different (“*abhinnatvān-nāma-nāminoḥ*”) the favorable service of the Lord directly and that of His Name are the same. Nevertheless, even though both processes are counted as *bhakti*, the scriptures have clearly described that there is more mercy available in the service of the Name. By examining the verses quoted below one will be able to easily understand the special characteristics of the Name above and beyond the Named.

“*sarvāparādha-kṛd api mucyate hari-samśrayāt
harer aṣṭy aparādhān yaḥ kuryāt dvīpada-pāṁśulah
nāmāśrayaḥ kadācit syāt taraty eva sa nāmatalaḥ
namno' pi sarva-suhṛdo hy aparādhāt tataty adah*”

(*Padma Purāṇa, svarga-khaṇḍa* 48)

“One may commit offences of all types, but by taking shelter of the Supreme Lord Hari, one will immediately become freed from them. If that person who is the lowest of mankind should commit offences

to the Lord then if he takes shelter of the Lord's name he can overcome those offences by the influence of the Holy Name. Thus the Name is all-auspicious and the cause of the highest welfare. If someone should commit offences to the Name, then can there be any doubt that he will fall down?"

The Name and the Named are basically non-different, but the Name is even more merciful than the Named (i.e. the Lord Himself). In his eight prayers glorifying the Holy Name, Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī has explained this scriptural conclusion for the benefit of all living beings in the following way:

*"vācya vācakam ity udeti bhavato nāmo-svarūpa-dvayaṁ
pūrvasmāt param eva haṁta karuṇā tatrāpi jānīmahe
yas tasmin vihitāparādha-nivahaḥ prānī samantād bhaved
āsyenedam upāśya so'pi hi sadānandāmbhodhau majjati"*

(verse 6)

"Oh Holy Name! You are manifested in two ways—one as the object of description, namely the personal form of the Lord (the Named) and the other from which describes or refers to Him—the Name, of which there are many forms such as Govinda, Rāma, Hari, Kṛṣṇa, etc. We judge that of these two, the Named and the Name, your descriptive form is more compassionate because even a living being who has committed offences to the Named will be immersed in the ocean of eternal ecstasy if He takes shelter of You in that form."

The purport of this statment is that one who commits offences to the Named may not get free from his offences by taking shelter of Him, but by taking shelter of His Holy Name he may be able to do so. Therefore, the form of the Name is even more merciful than the Named, this has been shown clearly. Furthermore, If one should commit offences to the Name, then, as described in the previous verse, there is no one in the creation who can save him from inevitable falldown. Sill, the unlimitedly merciful Name has left a door open for him, knowing that he has no other means:

*“nāmāparādha-yuktānām nāmāny eva haranty agham
aviśrānta-prayuktāni tāny evārtha karāṇi ca.”*

(PP.SK.48)

“Those who have committed offences to the Holy Name be freed of those offences by taking shelter of that very Name. The tireless and constant glorification of the Holy Name is the best means for achieving all ends.”

Therefore, even though the Supreme Lord and the name of the Lord are essentially identical, when the scriptures have already described the mercifulness of the Name as being greater then what doubt can there is more possibility of attaining grace through serving Him with the nine processes of devotional service than there is through serving the Named Himself.

Until he gets the merciful touch of the elixir of *mahat-kṛipā* there is no possibility of the “*Māyā*-killed” *jīva* taking up any of the nine processes of devotion at all. That unfailing and inconceivable *mahat-kṛipā* gives the *jīva* the spiritual strength to perform one or more of the nine processes of devotional service in a general way and thus gradually he becomes capable of performing the other, more specific *sādhanaṅgas* and finally he attains *prema*.

Even though a crutch-less cripple may not be able to negotiate a particular road by his own strength, if he gets a stick he may be able to do so. In the same way, even though there is no possibility of a *jīva* who is devoid of the grace of the saintly to take up any devotional process and advance on the spiritual path, he may be able to do so if gets the help of the “staff” of a devotee’s grace. By that staff’s help he develops the inclination and the internal strength to traverse that difficult path. The cripple, even after getting such a crutch must still progress by his own strength and efforts, but if gets the opportunity of a lift in someone’s vehicle then his journey will be infinitely more easy. In the same way, if the *jīva*, after getting the grace of a great devotee simply takes shelter of the Holy Name, with or without the other processes, then the way that he advances is similarly much easier and more productive than if he takes shelter of a mixture of the other processes excluding the Holy Name. Just as one has to pass exactly the same places on a road

whether one walks or rides in a car, so similarly one will have to pass through the same stages of advancement that have been described whether one takes exclusive shelter of the Holy Name or of the Name in the company of other processes or of other processes without the Holy Name. Even though the same stages will have to be crossed to attain to *prema*, still just as when walking one “has to go” himself and when going in a car he is taken, so too taking shelter of the Holy Name and other practices of devotional service have the same difference between them. This difference is the result of the Holy Name is being more merciful than the Lord who is the object of the Name or the Named. For one who has taken shelter of Him, the Holy Name “takes him through the stages of devotional advancement beginning with faith, as well as the sixty-four limbs of *sādhana bhakti* beginning with finding a genuine spiritual master. On the other hand, those who take shelter of other processes rather than the Holy Name find that have to process through the different stages of “faith” and “finding a spiritual master” as they appear in the course of time by the strength of his own endeavours. The ability to progress on the devotional path or spiritual strength becomes possible for the *jīva* by the grace of great *sādhus*, nevertheless, just as even an expert swimmer is not able to cross over an especially wide expanse of water but can do so easily and happily with the help of a boat, so similarly a person who takes shelter of the “boat” of the Holy Name will have far more hope

in crossing the wide river of the culture of devotion than even the most expert practitioner of the other processes. Anyone who thinks this over clearly will surely be able to understand. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu explicitly stated this great speciality of the Holy Name Himself.

*“bhajaner madhye śreṣṭha nava vidha bhakti
kṛṣṇa prem kṛṣṇa dite dhore mahā śhakti
tār madhye sarva śreṣṭha nām sankīrtan
niraparādhe loile nām pāy prem dhan*

(CC.Madhya 4.65—66)

“Of all the different processes of *bhajan* or devotional service, the best are those known as the nine-fold divisions of *bhakti*. All of these processes are very potent to give love for Kṛṣṇa and thus Kṛṣṇa Himself. Of these nine processes, however, the most superior is the chanting of the Holy Name, which if one is able to do without committing offences he will certainly attain the wealth of love for Kṛṣṇa.”

If someone thinks that a person who takes shelter of the Holy Name will not have to perform any other devotional process like finding a spiritual master and taking initiation from him, that is not at all wise because, even though love of God is easily attainable through the Holy Name, still one has to follow the same steps of advancement. One should know that the steps of “faith”, “*sādhū-saṅga*” (association of devotees) etc., and the *sādhanāṅgas* of taking shelter of and initiation from a genuine spiritual master are still

parts of that step-by-step process. Because the different divisions of devotional service in the practice stage (*sādhana-bhakti*) are evolved out of the nine devotional activities known as *bhakti aṅgas*, they can be called each other's cause and effect respectively. The effect is always dependent on its cause, but the cause never depends on its effect. Therefore, when one is practicing the devotional activities in a general and preliminary way there is no dependence on any of the sixty-four divisions of activities that are known as *sādhanāṅgas* like initiation, etc.—“*dīkṣhā purascharijā bidhi apekṣhā nā kore.*” CC Madhya 15—“The chanting of the Holy Name does not depend on any rules of initiation or purification.” But the *sādhanāṅgas* of initiation, etc. which are the results of a preliminary, general practice of the nine devotional activities definitely do depend on them. Because the shelter of the Name is the cause of getting the *mantra* from the *guru* (which is known technically as initiation) the Holy Name is also called the great *mantra* or *mahāmantra* (great incantation). Also, just as the nine activities of *bhakti* are the causes of the different activities in the practice stage of devotion, so similarly the *sādhanāṅgas* are the cause of further stages of progress like the removal of obstacles, unwavering determination, etc. up to the point of *bhāva* and *prema*. (“*premer kāron bhakti koroye prakāśh*” CC Adi. 8). “Devotional service in practice is the cause of love of God and brings about its manifestation.”) Thus even though there is no dependence on the *sādhanāṅgas*

of finding a spiritual master and taking initiation from him in the preliminary stage of general practice of devotional principles, because these *sādhanaṅgas* are the causes of further advancement to the point of *bhāva* and *prema*, there is definitely a dependence on them if one wants to attain the ultimate goal. Of all these things, however, the Holy Name is the root cause.

The course of advancement, the progressive path of *bhakti* leading to *prema* is the same for the practitioner who takes shelter of the Holy Name. The conscious living entity cannot engage in any activity without desire. From consciousness or knowledge comes desire which in turn manifests as activity. When one takes shelter of devotional service in its different forms, then one by one, its effects of faith, the association of devotees, the stage of serious devotional practice and so on up to the stage of devotional ecstasies and finally pure love of God. Even though all these developments are the results of the determined efforts or spiritual strength of the devotees, still for everyone but the devotee who has taken full shelter of the Holy Name, the desires and activity which are observable in them as they advance progressively through faith etc. are all the result of their personal efforts. On the other hand the activities and desires of the devotee who is under the Holy Names' wing are not his own but are all inspired by the Name and thus it can be said that he is availing himself of "vehicular facilities" to be whisked to the destination of

prem, whereas the other candidate is restricted to his own efforts. This is the resplendant distinction of the process of *nāmāśraya* (taking shelter of the Holy Name) amongst the different kinds of devotional activities. Just as the tree does not depend on its own desire to grow but being driven by some extraneous force, in the course of time, it progressively displays branches, leaves and flowers etc, so in the same way, when one takes shelter of the Holy Name then he is activated by the desire of the Holy Name and as a result, all of the progressive steps of devotional advancement beginning from faith and the divisions of devotional practice beginning from accepting a spiritual master and, in the course of time, *bhāva-bhakti* and *prema-bhakti* are all manifested in their proper sequence. Therefore, in his explanation of the first verse of the Śikṣāṣṭakam, which was personally composed by Lord *Chaitanya Mahāprabhu*, the author of the *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita* has given a brief explanation of how by taking shelter of the Holy Names one will rapidly progress through the steps of faith etc. up to *prema* and then remain eternally immersed in the nectar of service to the Lord.

“*sāṅkīrtan hoite pāp soṅgsār nāshon*
chitta śhuddhi śarva-bhakti sādhan udgom
kṛṣṇa-premodgam premāmṛita āswādon
kṛṣṇa-prāpti sebāmṛita-samudre mojjon.”

(CC. Antya 20/10-11)

“From chanting the Holy Names, or taking ref-

uge of the Holy Name, all the faults of sin and ignorance are destroyed. Such a purification of consciousness corresponds to the stage of faith, following which all the different manifestation of *bhakti* in nine divisions and sixty-four *sādhanaṅgas* make their appearance. After this he advances in progressive stages to the point of *prema*, as a consequence of which he gets the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. There he submerges in the ocean of nectar of devotional service and relishes transcendental happiness. All this takes place by the mercy of the Holy Name. Not just that the Holy Name takes His surrendered devotee through the stages of faith, *sat-saṅga*, etc. up to the point of *prema*, but all the other various activities of devotional service attain their completion or fulfilment through the Name. Therefore the Named Himself announced the glory of the Name to the world, saying:

"Naba-bidha-bhakti-pūrṇo nām hoite hoy"

(CC. *Madhya* 15.108)

"All the nine limbs of *bhakti* become perfected by the association of the Holy Name."

In the course of time, if a person who has taken shelter of the Holy Name finds that the Name is not creating within his heart the desire to perform any other devotional activity and hence no such activity manifests, then one should know that certainly there must be some offence to Holy Name present there. One should know with conviction that other than

offences to the Name there is no other reason that its potencies should remain unapparent. This essential truth of the scriptures has been clearly described in the *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita*:

*“heno kṛṣṇa-nām jadi loy bohu bār
tobu jadi prem-nāhi nāhi aśhru dhār
tobe jāni aparādh tāhāte prochur
kṛṣṇa nām bij tāhe nā hoy aṅkur.”* (Ādi 8/25-26)

“If one continues to chant the Holy Name for a long period of time but does not develop love (*prema*, through the progressive stages) and its symptoms of tears etc., then I can understand that he has committed such great amounts of offences that the seed of the Holy Name has not been able to sprout.”

Even the Holy Name, who is the most merciful, can become displeased with someone in the event that he commits any offence, and because of that He becomes reluctant to impart His mercy fully, even to the point of complete refrainment. Such offences to the Holy Name are called *nāmāparādha*, and they are ten in number. These ten *nāmāparādhas* are described in the *Padma Purāṇa* have been described as follows: (1) blasphemy of the devotees, (2) to think the name of Śhiva and the demigods are independent of Viṣṇu, (3) to disregard the spiritual master, (4) to blaspheme the Vedas and the scriptures in pursuance of the Vedic version, (5) to think that the glories of the Holy Name are an

exaggeration or overstatement, (6) to make different imaginary explanations of the meaning of the Name, (7) to commit sin on the strength of chanting, (8) to consider other pious activities to be equal to the Holy Name, (9) to give instructions in the Holy Name to a faithless person, (10) to have no affection for the Holy Name even after hearing His glories. [The author has explained the form of the Holy Name, His nature, energies and the different offences in His opus, “*Śrī Śrī Nāma Cintāmaṇi*.” —editor]

In the event that one should commit an offence, then one should first go to the place, i.e. the devotee, spiritual master, scripture etc. where it was done and should ask specifically for forgiveness. If that is not possible for some reason, then one has no other recourse than to wholeheartedly take shelter of the Holy Name, singlemindedly chanting it. This is the only course of salvation for by the mercy of the Name one will attain freedom from his offences.

One should be very careful not to commit any *nāmāparādhas* and always keep the Name pleased. One of the special features of the Holy Name as opposed to the other kinds of *bhakti* is that if one should commit offences to Him, then only by taking refuge in Him (and in no other process or practice) can one get free from that offence. Consequently, the unique capability of the Holy Name to dissolve all offences has been glorified in the *śhāstra*:

*“jāte nāmāparādhe’pi pramādena kathañcana
sadā sañkīrtyan nāma tad-eka-śarano bhabet.”*

(PP. Svarga 48)

“If due to carelessness one should commit some offence to the Holy Name, then his duty is to constantly chant the Holy Name and take shelter of Him in singleminded devotion.”

Thus the Name has been described as the most excellent of all because there are always possibilities of committing offences while advancing on the devotional path, and if that should happen there is no other shelter than Him. He is therefore the most beneficent of all the limbs of *bhakti* and there can thus be no doubt that one should take shelter of Him before any other of the *bhakti-aṅgas*. This is true for any practitioner whether he be a novice, on the *sādhana* stage or perfected. Especially, it has been proclaimed in the *śhāstras* that in the *Kali Yuga* there is no process of devotional activity independent of the taking shelter of the Holy Name.

*“harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatiḥ anyathā”*

(BNP 38/126)

“In the age of *Kali*, there is no other way, no other way, no other way to attain perfection than by chanting the names of Hari, the names of Hari the names of Hari and nothing else.”

The Holy Name has been glorified with such em-

phasis in the *Kali Yuga* because it is the religious process for the age and because it is the root cause of all other devotional exercises as well as the fullfiller and purifier of other practices for spiritual realization like karma, etc. Therefore, if any person is able to understand that in this age there is no better or equal or even independent process of developing *prem* other than taking shelter of the Holy Name, then it can be concluded that he is an especially fortunate person.

The originator of the congregational chanting of the Holy Names and its greatest proponent Lord Gourāṅga promulgated the above verse and explained its purpose. If we are able to think a little carefully we will be able to understand that in this age the most important duty of every man is to take shelter of the Holy Name without committing offences and that, other than this, there is no means by which any living entity can attain his ultimate welfare.

*“dārdhya lāgi ‘harer nām” ukti tin bār,
joro lok bujhāite punar “eva” kār,
“kebol” śhabda punarapi niśchoy kārōṇ,
gyān jog, karma, top ādi nivāroṇ,
annathā je māne tār nāhiko nistār
nāi nāi nāi tin, tine “eva” kār.*

(CC. Ādi. 17.20-22)

“For emphasis it was stated three times in the verse “the names of Hari”, and even then, to help the dull-

mind to understand, the word “*eva*” (certainly) was added. Then again, to add conviction, the word “*kevalam*” was added, meaning “only”. By this, all other practices such as the cultivation of knowledge, Yoga practice, fruitive activities and austerities have all been denied. Anyone who thinks otherwise will never attain deliverance and therefore the verse states three times, “no other way, no other way, no other way”.

Just as from a seed the plant sprouts first into a seedling and then there is a gradual development of the stem, branches and finally fruits and flowers, so too from the seed of the Holy Name (which is given by the kindness of a devotee) develop all the different branches of devotional service and from that *bhāva* and *prema* finally appear. Therefore, one should know that the main cause for advancement from the points of *śraddhā*, or faith, all the way up to *prema* is the Holy Name and all those developments should be seen as His effects. Just as no effect can take place without a cause, so similarly all the different varieties of devotional practice are caused by the Holy Name, thus it can be called the *aṅgī sādhan* or the main practice and all the other *sādhanaṅgas* can be viewed as branches of this main practice. If anyone is unaware that the Holy Name is the *Yuga-dharma* and is therefore the prime process of the cultivation of *bhakti* in the age of Kali, and thus tries to put the other practices on an equal footing with it, then he is

also guilty of committing an offence to the Holy Name. One of the offences (the eighth) is to think the chanting of the Holy Names is on a par with other pious activities—even including other types of devotion to the Lord. Other than offences to the Holy Name which result in the dissatisfaction of the Name, there can be no other reason for the Name's glories to remain undisplayed. Thus, if someone should not place the chanting of the Holy Name on the highest rung of devotional life and think that any other religious activity is equal to it, then he is guilty of committing the eighth offence to the Holy Name. The result of the offence will be that the unfailing potency of the Name will not be manifest.

If one ignores or displays animosity to the root or seed of a plant, then the development of a stalk, branches, leaves and flowers etc. becomes a complete imagination only. Similarly, if one commits offences to the Holy Name which is the root cause or seed of all other practices of devotional service and ultimately *bhāva* and *prema*, then there is no possibility of the creeper of *bhakti* growing in flourishing.

On the other hand, if the seed is pleased or nourished, then in due course all the other branches and leaves will inevitably appear, unstoppably. So, in that way, if the *aṅgī-sādhana* or main practice or seed of the devotional creeper is satisfied and nourished, then all the other practices and their fruits

will certainly appear in their proper order. There is not even any dependence on any personal investigation or endeavour on the part of the devotee. Therefore, in especially this fallen age of *Kali*, anyone who thinks that no other spiritual or devotional practice is equal to the Holy Name in any way and keeps it on the most lofty seat in his heart above all other processes and practices, then he can be called a *nāmāśrayī* or one who has taken full shelter of the Holy Name. If one does not have such a feeling of respect and adoration for the Name, then he cannot be called a *nāmāśrayī*. The Lord has promised to protect those who take shelter of Him in all respects, and in the same way the Holy Name will protect the *nāmāśrayī* from all kinds of offences and give him the ultimate prize of *prema*. But if one doesn't take shelter of the Holy Name in the above-described fashion and simply chants it, he is also able to attain its fruits if he chants making an effort to avoid the offences. Therefore the Holy Name has been called the *aṅgī* and all other practices *aṅgas* and it is imperative that one keeps in mind that the Name is the cause of all other practices and they are its effects. For this reason, the previously quoted verse stated emphatically three times that only the Holy Name is an effective process in this age of *Kali*, and again clearly stated three times, "*nāsty eva*" that there is no other alternative or independent process.

Thus it is seen that the *śrīmad Bhāgavatam* has also proclaimed in a loud voice that in the age of Kali, taking shelter of the Holy Name by chanting it in *kīrtan* etc. is the chief practice for attaining perfection.

*"kāler doṣa-nidhe rājann asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya muktā-sangaḥ param vrajet."*
(SB. 12.3.51)

"My dear king, the age of Kali is like an ocean of faults, but it has one great quality. (By saying the number "one" he has specifically limited the amount of qualities of the Age.) That quality is the chanting of the Holy Names of the Lord by which the *jīva* becomes free from all material bondage and attains the supreme destination."

The purport of this is that there is only one great auspicious feature, or great good in this age and that is the chanting of the Holy Names or *Śrī Nāmasaṅkīrtana* and that everything else is simply an ocean of faults, that is certain. Just as the courtiers and ministers follow the king wherever he goes, so also, if one takes shelter of the Holy Name in the consciousness that it is the source of all other practices and is the best of all, then along with it all the remaining practices of devotion will appear as its effects and will finally reward the *jīva* with the supreme destination. Therefore, because there is no other completely independent or self sufficient process in

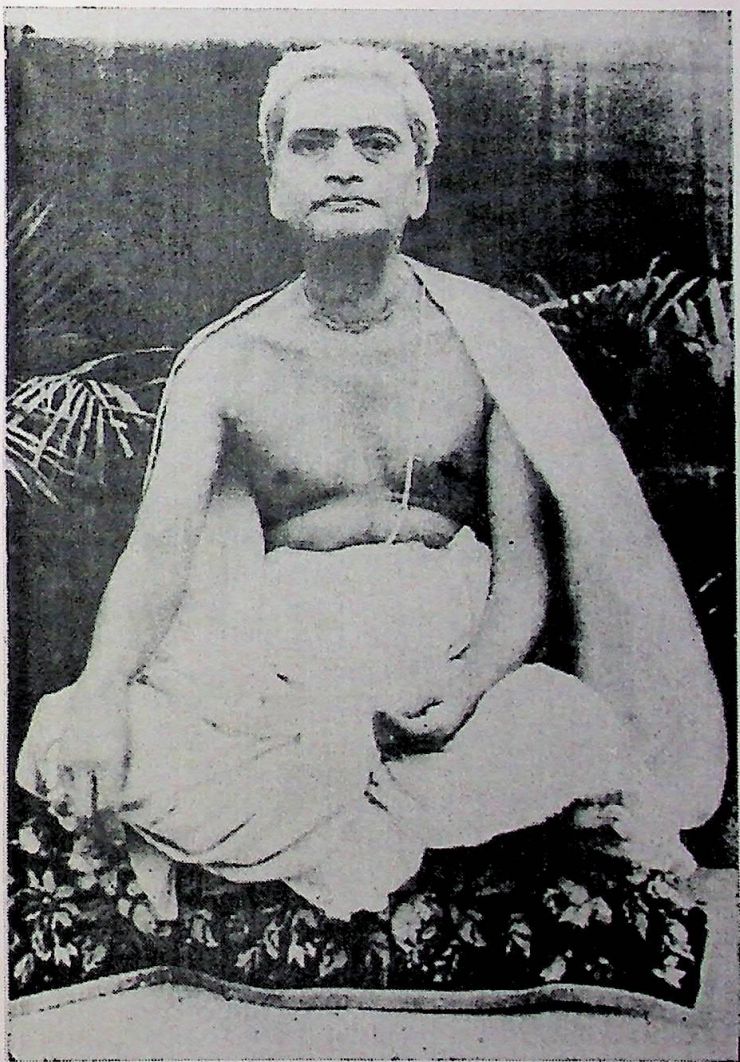
this age, if one does not take shelter of the Name in the knowledge that it is the cause of all other manifestations of devotion then the other subordinate devotional “limbs” will not manifest clearly, rather they will be the causes of undesirable effects—in short they will become an ocean of faults. One should take shelter of the Holy Name whole-heartedly, knowing that the supreme auspiciousness is situated in it, and from which all other types of auspiciousness in the forms of the other devotional practices and their results.

In another statement also the Supreme Lord Gour Hari has joyfully made the same proclamation of the Holy Name’s pre-eminence.

*“harṣhe prabhu kohe—śuno, Swaroop Rām-rāy
nām saṅkīrtan kalau param upāy.”* (CC. Antya 20.7)

“In ecstasy the Supreme Lord said, “Listen, Swarūp and Rām Rāy! In this age of Kali the topmost means of spiritual culture is the chanting of the Holy Names.” In other words, in the age of Kali the means for getting the other means is the Holy Name and thus it is the topmost means for attaining the supreme destination.

The deeply hidden secret of all the scriptures is that the Holy Name is present at the root of the tree of spiritual practices and its fruits of love of God as the seed. The father of the process of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya Mahāprabhu taught



**SRI NAMA VIGYANACHARYA
SRIMAD KANUPRIYA GOSWAMI**

this as we can see from the following passage of the *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita*. (Ādi-16)

“In that country live a brahmin of the name Tapan Mīśra. He was not able to understand clearly what was the ultimate goal of life or the process for attaining it. He had read many scriptures and heard many explanations, but they simply confused him more and he remained uncertain about what the best spiritual practices were as well as the goal of life. One day in a dream a brahmin appeared to him and said, “Listen, Tapan go to Nīmāi Paṇḍit. He will be able to clarify your question. Have no doubts about Him as He is the Supreme Lord Himself. After seeing such a dream Tapan Mīśra went to the Lord and explained to Him what he had seen. The Lord was pleased and told him to do *Harī-nāma-saṅkīrtana*.”

We can see from this that the devotional practice par-excellence is the chanting of the Holy Name. It is the cause of all the other devotional practices and of the attainment of the ultimate goal of life. Thus the Holy Name is the main or *aṅgī-sādhana*. In another place it is also stated :

“*sādhya-sādhon-tattva je kichu moṅgol
harīnām-saṅkīrtane milibe sokol.*”

(*Chaitanya Bhāgavat* 1.10)

“All truths of the practices of spiritual life and its ultimate purpose, in short everything auspicious will come to you through the chanting of the Holy Name.

Thus the Holy Name of the Lord reigns supreme

as the cause of all the other *sādhanaṅgas* and their fruits, all of which are its effects. If one remembers this cause and effect relationship and does not consider the *aṅgī* or central process to be equal or inferior to any other process but worships the Name with great affectionate reverence, taking shelter of it in consciousness of its preeminence, then there is no possibility of anything inauspicious taking place—everything will be full of good fortune, that is sure. In this age, if one doesn't place the Holy Name on the highest seat within his heart and takes some other process to be equal to chanting of the Name, then we should know that this offence is the *result* of the influence of the age of Kali. If this kind of *aparādha* spreads in the world then everyone will be deprived of the supreme goal of life. (A complete discussion of this topic will be forthcoming in the second volume of “*Śrī Nāma Chintāmaṇi*”)

Lord Gaurasundar, the purifier of this age, did not limit His philanthropic work to preaching the glories of the Holy Name, but He Himself “practised what He preached” and showed everyone how the Holy Name was the supreme process and by doing so distributed the Holy Name along with its glories everywhere, to everyone without restriction. In this world which is covered by darkness of the age, the full illumination of the Holy Name was revealed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Prabodhānanda Saraswatī, who was a great scholar as well as an eye-

witness of the Lord's activities, wrote in great joy and astonishment.

*“yan nāptam karma-niṣṭhair na ca samodhigatam yat
 tapo-dhyāna-yogair
 vairāgya tyāga-tattva-stutibhir api na yat tarkitam cāpi kaiścit,
 govinda prema-bhājām api na ca kalitam yad rahasyam svayam tat
 nāmnaiva prādurāsīd avatarati pare yatra tam naumi gauram.”*
 (Chaitanya Chandrāmṛta verse 3)

“I worship Gourāṅga, the Supreme Person, because that which no one was able to attain by the devoted performance of fruitive activities, nor by penance, meditation, the practice of yoga, renunciation, austerities or the offering of panegyrics, which no philosophical debaters were able to ascertain by their arguments, and what is more, before His appearance, not even the Vaiṣṇavas who worshiped Govinda were able to appreciate, that supreme mystery of *prema* was revealed in the world by the Holy Name which was brought into the universe when He incarnated.”

Although internally He is the same black Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person, Lord Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya Dev, the purifier of this age of Kali, being externally covered by the mood and bodily effulgence of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī has taken the appearance of a bolt of lightening. He is the most compassionate and is the topmost object of worship and the Holy Name which He preached is the topmost process of worship. This

is stated by the topmost of scriptures the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

*“kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣā kṛṣṇam sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārsadam
yajāñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyaḥ yajanti hi sumedhasaḥ”*

(11.5.32)

“Even though it was directly witnessed by many devotees that inwardly He was the same Kṛṣṇa, of a blackish hue, He externally appeared in the golden form of Goursundar. He always uttered the two syllables “Kṛṣṇa” and kṛṣṇa’s qualities, name, pastimes were always present on His lips. He appeared with His expansions Nityananda, and Adwaita as well as Srivas and many other devotees who were secondary expansions. His weapon of the Holy Name also appeared with Him as well as eternal associates like Gadadhar and Govinda etc. Any saintly person in this age of Kali who is endowed with sufficient intelligence will worship this Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya, the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the sacrifice of chanting His holy names.

Finis

REMINISCENCE

The holy advent of Shree Shree Gouranga Sundar stands out as the least of the good events, in the history of the modern age. In the near future over the ashes of materialism and consumerism a great religion of the soul will emerge—the inconceivable influence of which on the human heart will wipe out all sorrows, distress, dejections, malice and all sorts of blemishes—and thereafter

This reminiscence is written as the quint essence of the article with title 'Phalguni Purnima' in the magazine Shri 'Sonar Gouranga' published from Saistaganj Shrihatta (1335 B. S. Ashar—Agrahāyan) and the Jaisthya month issue of 1338 B. S. The topic is discussed there in details. There has been a great movement of late initiated by the great scholars like Mr. Wales and others unprecedented regarding the emergence of a new auspicious age at the end of the unprecedented bad days of our time. (Ānanda Bāzār Patrikā 5.10.1933) The thoughtful readers may please consider about the extent of similarities of the objective of the said reminiscence and the opinion mentioned above. The distinctive difference is that the said prediction of the Western scholars has recently been declared while the reason remains unascertained and only a product of vague imagination. The author's efforts may be very humble and insignificant but were written many years before the western thoughts came and the reason of the emergence of new age was ascertained and fully supported by the sacred scriptures (Shastras). This is an humble appeal to our fellowmen to kindly consider this point.

[For a complete and comprehensive reading of the article author's "Vaijayanti Prabanhamālā" may kindly be seen.]

keeping the whole world together in one unbreakable bond of pure, clear and wholehearted love of God. The name of that religion is the 'Religion of love' propounded by Shri Gouranga—that will be the religion of the present time.

By the churning of unexpected and unprecedented events not only in India but from one corner of the earth to the other—in the same way quiet and serenity are achieved by the churned ocean after the appearance of nectar—similarly with the appearance of the best religion 'Religion of love' all restlessness, furies and scums will be quenched surely and finally by the multiplier effects of 'Gour Leela'.

The more we will be able to understand rather realise Shree Gouranga—the more and more very deep intricate mysticism of the life events of Shree Gouranga will unfold itself before us—the present world will be comensurately nearer to the best of joy and the best of peace. This we must know steadfastly. The fullest function of the fullest form of Jeeva—the same is the manifestation of the reasons or reactions of 'Gour Leela' which expounds itself publicly for all—once in every Kalpa. The 'Gour Leela' of this Kalpa though disappeared from this world at present, the great reaction of the same bringing the best of good, has just been spreading itself recently over the world.

In a very subtle way, the inevitable influence of

the same will be revealing gradually, and after Kali's untimely exist, in this Kaliyuga only the Premadharmā (Religion of love) will prevail throughout the rest of the period of Kali as the best Atmadharma (Religion of Self) —and gradually people will realise the same being hal-
lowed in its own glory.

From the Shastras (Scriptures) we know that the four Yugas of the humans make of one Chaturyuga or Dibyayuga of the world of Gods. The one thousand chaturyugas or Dibyayugas make a day of Brahmā—the Shastras have mentioned that. This is called a 'Kalpa'. In one Kalpa there are fourteen Manwantaras and seventy one chaturyugas (four yugas) comprise one Manwantara. Chaitanya Charitāmrita has described this inner meaning of the saying of the Śhastras as follows:—

Satya, Tretā, Dwāpar, Kali chāriyuga jāni

Ei chāriyuge ek dibyayuga māni

Ekattar dibyayuge ek manwantar

chaudda manwantar Brahmār dibas bhitar

(Adi 3/5-6)

We know there are four yugas—Sātya, Tretā, Dwāpar and Kali. These four yugas make one dibyayuga. Seventy one dibyayugas make one Manwantara and fourteen manwantara comprise one day of Brahma.

According to our year calculation Kali's span is 4,32, 000 years, Dwapar's 8,64,000, Treta's 12, 96, 000 years and Satya's 17, 28,000 years. According to our worldly time one kalpa consists of 432, 00, 00, 000 four hundred and thirty two crores of year or 4320 millions of years make one Kalpa. This one Kalpa is Brahma's one day and thirty days like this make a month and twelve months make a year. Fifty such years make a 'Parardha' or half the life span of Brahmā. Brahmā's life is twice of that Parārdha or hundred such years. The present Brahma has past his fifty. At present in the second fifty he is just on the first day of the first month of the 1st Kalpa named as 'Swet barāh' (white boar).

The foot notes may please be seen at page 28 (32nd. issue) of Bengali translation and commentary of Laghu Bhagabatamrita by Prabhupad Srimat Madan Gopāl Goswāmi edited by Prabhupad Srimat Atul Krishna Goswami.

We are surprised beyond descriptions when we consider the life span of Bramhā. But there cannot be any doubt that even greater surprises await the small *Jīvas* when they try to consider these all qualities, leelas, ranifications of God who is the

reason of all reasons and who is always present and He is the beginning of all beginnings omniscient and omnipresent. At the twinkle of His eyes cause births and deaths of such Bramhā's. So awestruck with immense beauty of God the Vaishnaba poet Vidyāpati writes—

*Kato Chaturānan Mari Mari Jāyatha
Na Tuā Ādi Abasānā
Tohe Janami Punah Tohe Samāwata
Sāgar Lahari Samāna.*

—Vidyāpati

Many Many chaturānanas (Brahmās) keep on dying but you have no end. Before you They are born and come to an end like sea waves.

Listening to such leelās and beauties of God we may be overwhelmed with greater and greater surprises but we must always remember that the small man with his limited knowledge does not have any right to disbelieve the limitless, eternal and unthinkable leelas and manifestations of God.

Taking the hues and the names of "Shukla" "Rakta", "Shyām" and "Kṛṣṇa" (i.e., white, red, blue and black) God sends His Avatārs to initiate the yugadharma (i.e., the religion to be followed in the particular yuga) in Satya, Treta, Dwapar and Kali yugas respectively in each day or one Kalpa of Brahmā in thousand such Chaturyugas this is what is known from the Śāstras (Scriptures).

*Kathyate Barna—namābhyāṅg Shukla Satyayuge Harih.
Raktāh Shyāmah Kramang Kṛṣṇastretyāṅg Dwāpare
Kalou.*

(Shri Laghu Bhāgawatamrite)

This is the general rule of advent of yugābatar in 999 Chaturyugas out of 1000 Chaturyugas in a Kalpa. But almost at the middle of each Kalpa—only the twenty eighth Chaturyuga of the seventh manwantara named Baibaswata has this exceptional features,Satyā and Tretā yugas of the same do not have any speciality, since 'Shukla' and 'Rakta' yugābatārs are the initiators of the relevant yugadharmas in these Satya and Tretā yugas respectively.

But the Dwapar and Kali yuga are exceptions. Amongst the thousand Dwāpars and Kali Yugas in a Kalpa, the Śāstras (Scriptures) indicate that the Dwāpar and Kali yuga only of the seventh Manwantara named Baibaswata have the uncommon features; because in these two yugas instead of 'Shyām' and 'Kṛṣṇa' Yugābatārs respectively the Shastras have specially sung of 'Kṛṣṇa' and 'Peeta' Yugābatār. The departure from the general rule of chronology of the Yugabatars happens specially in the Dwāpar and Kali specially in the exceptional and uncommon Chaturyuga—only once in each Kalpa. About this Chaturyuga during the name (christening) ceremony of Shri kṛṣṇa Shri Gargācharya said—

Asan Barnāstraya Hyasya Grihnatu anuyugang tanuḥ

Shukla Raktastathā Peeta Idāneeng Kṛṣṇatang Gatāḥ
(Shrimad Bhāgawata 10/8/13)

In the three Yugas this Person had the hue and the body according to the Yugas Shukla (White), Rakta (Red), and Peeta (yellow) now he has taken the hue and the name Kṛṣṇa.

Explaining this sloka mentioning about the uncommon Yugābatār the poet of Shri Charitāmrita has written:—

Shukla Rakta Peetabarna Ei Tin Dyuti
Satya Treta Kalikāle dharen Shripati
Idaneeng Dwāpare Inho hailā Kṛṣṇabarna
Ei Saba Sashtagam Purāner marma

(1/3/29-30)

Shripati takes

Shukla (White), Rakta (Red), Peeta (Yellow) complexions respectively in 'Satya, Tretā and Kali Yugas'. Now in Dwāpara He has taken kṛṣṇa barna (black) complexion—this is the inner meaning of all Shastras, Āgamas and purāns.

About this Yugābatār of this very special and exceptional Chaturyuga Shri Karabhajan has explained fully in the 19th to 37th slokas of the fifth chapter of eleven canto of Shrimad Bhāgabat—these are not being mentioned here for the fear of over statement.

‘Kṛṣṇa’ and ‘Peeta’ the uncommon and exceptional Yugābatār as mentioned in the Śāstras they are not Avatār—He is God Himself the creator on all Avatār—Shyamsundar Shri Kṛṣṇa arrived at the special Dwāpara and again with the special arrival came as “Peeta” in the Kali immediately following the special Dwāpara i.e. came as Gour Sundar with the golden complexion. When all pervading God Himself arrives since there does not remain any need of Yugābatār for initiating the Yugadharma those Yugābatārs are attracted like super magnet by God Himself and enter into Him. At the time of arrival of Sawam Rup Taṭwa i.e. God Himself not only the Yugābatārs but all Gods get embedded in Him, this rule as mentioned in the Shastras, the poet Shri Charitāmrita has explained to us a very simple language:—

*“Purna Bhagabān Avatare Jai kālē
 Āar Sab Abatār Tāte Āsi Mile
 Narāyaṇ, Chaturbymah, Matsādyabatār
 Yuga Manwantarābatār Jato Achhe Āar
 Sabe Asi Kṛṣṇa-Ange Hai Abatirna
 Aichhe Avatāre Kṛṣṇa Bhagabān pūrṇa.*

(Ādi 4/9-11)

Therefore, in the Dawāpara Yuga when God Himself arrives then the Yugābatār by the name and complexion “Shyām” (Light Blue) becomes one with Kṛṣṇa. similarly when the same Kṛṣṇa in

the special arrival comes as Shri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya, then the Yugābatār by the name and complexion 'Kṛṣṇa' becomes one with golden complexioned Shri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya—this is to be understood. That is why in those special and exceptional Dwāpara and Kali in the Kalpa the common Yugābatārs do not initiate the Yugadharma in those Yugas. In this uncommon and exceptional Dwāpara, God in His fullest form—reveals *jīva*'s religion of the soul in the fullest form or the 'Premadharma' (Religion of love) and in His special arrival in the beginning of the kaliyuga just following the Dwāpara reveals the stored 'premdharma' and massively showering its seed Shri Namasankirtan, during His stay (leelā), He again showers these seeds of Premadharma for the future generations of the kaliyuga—the reactions of which are being seen some centuries after the withdrawal of Gourleelā—in the form of sowing the seeds and coming out of plants with twigs and branches and spreading all over in the world and will stay upto the balance period of Kali—a time which will be better than the Satyayuga and will be a 'Premyuga'. In every Kalpa i.e., within 432 crores of years (if Bramhā's night or devastation at the end of Kalpa is taken into consideration within twice as much years or 864 Crores of years) the fullest form of the religion of *jīva* or premadharma for the common man such oppor-

tunity comes only once in the history of the world—and for us to specially rejoice for the special hope is that this is the that exceptional and uncommon Kaliyuga.

Tilling of the soil may not be directly related to the production of crops but tilling is done for the purpose of production of crops and is helpful for such—but sowing of seeds is the direct cause of the effect—production of crops—similarly all the Avatars like Matsya and Kurma and Shukla and Rakta etc. of Shri Kṛṣṇa— whatever role playing they do—these works including initiating the Yuga Dharma may not be the direct cause of the production of Prema-crops, it helps for introduction of Prema and carries the intention of the production of Prema crops—but where the time is near of introduction of Prema-dharma throughout the world—(the exposition of all leelās (role playings) of all Avatārs beforehand carry that same purpose)—then arrives Shri Kṛṣṇa Himself with His Braja and exposes the Prema-dharma in the world. No Avatar except Shri Krishna Himself sows the Prema-seeds for the immediate next Kaliyuga or the Premayuga for distribution and sowing, and keeping the seeds stored in the world, for a while He keeps Himself away from human sights. Thereafter when the right moment arrives for the best holy period of Kalpas for the jeevas—for giving away Prema-Bhakti or the fullest form of reli-

gion of soul—He comes in the fullest form of a Bhakta (devotee) having imbibed the spirit of Rādhā and covering Himself with her complexion i.e., in the shape of the fullest form of a devotee in a subtle way Shri Kṛṣṇa the fullest form of God comes as Shri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya, the saviour of the Kaliyuga, in Shri Nabadwipdham. The intricate mystery of the Shastras (Scriptures) has been mentioned thus by the author of Shri Charitāmrita,— taking those stored seeds of Prema, in the first part of the evening of Kali.

*Baibaswata Nām Āi Saptam Manwantar
Sātaish Chaturyuga Gelā Tāhār Antar
Astābingsha Chaturyuge Dwāparer Sheshe
Brajera Sahit Hai Kṛṣṇer Prakāshe*

(1/3/7,8)

* * * * *

*Jathesha Bihāri Kṛṣṇa Kari Antardhan
Antardhan Kari Mane Kore Anumān
Chirakāl Nāhi Kari Prem Bhakti Dān
Bhakti Binā Jagater Nāhi Abasthān
Āpane Kariba Bhaktabhāb Angikāre
Āpane Āchari Dharma Shikhāiba Sabāre
Yugadharma Prabartan Hai Angsha Haite
Āma binā Anya Nāre Brajaprem Dite
Tāhāte Āpane Bhaktagan laiya Sange
Prithibite Abatari Kariba Nāna Range*

*Ato Bhābi Kaliyuger Pratham Sandhyāya,
Abatirna Hailā Kṛṣṇa Āpane Nadiyāy*

(1/3/11, 12)

Kṛṣṇa arrives with Bṛaja in the end of Dwāpara in the Twentyeighthth Chaturyuga after twentyseven Chaturyugas have passed in the seventh Manwantara named Baibaswata. Kṛṣṇa disappears after having moved about according to His will and after this disappearance He considers that I have never made bounties of Prem Bhakti here and without Bhakti the World cannot stay.

I shall act as a Bhakta (devotee) and having followed this religion I shall preach the same. The introduction of Yugadharmo is from a part of Mine but none except Me can bestow Bṛaja Prema. So I shall go to the earth with My devotees and there enjoy Myself in various ways. So thinking Kṛṣṇa arrived at Nadiā in the first evening of Kaliyuga.

At present though Gour-leelā is withdrawn from here the Prema seed which has been strewn in the World during that leelā due to sure and unfallible reactions of its influence in the néar future from one corner of the earth to the other the World will be flooded by a great flash of 'Premadharmā'.

The rescue of our Jagāi Mādhāi is indicative of the initiation of Crores of Jagāi Mādhāis in this 'Premadharmā'. The sprout from the seed of

Prema in the near future gradually will spread widely and will offer the shady shelter of its leaves and boughs to crores of Jagāi Mādhāis to encalm and enbalm them from their wordly sufferings—the rescue leelā of one Jagāi Mādhāi is the reason of those future acts and activation of its seeds; otherwise during the period of mass salvation it is unnecessary to rescue individuals.

The method of rescue by which in the near future Crores of Chapāl Gopāls (being mahad Aparādhis—Aparādhis to great souls, say, Baishnabites) will fulfil the desires of their crying souls—in one rescue leelā of one Chāpāl Gopāl the reason or the seed has been activated. Breaking the spells of illusions of wealth comparable to God Indra's and women as if from heaven, the way they will run after the great sweetness of God, the seed of that work is activated during the exposed leelā by the departure of Raghunath. Shunning his wealth and family, otherwise for shri Das Goswami who is God's all time companion, for him the glory of renouncing his wealth and family is truly insignificant. In the future that crores of post-proud beurocrats and serious crazy with power will be touched by their own conscience and sense of sacrifice and will shun the powers they hold feeling them as crow's droppings and will consider the service to the feet of God as the best achievement of life,—the reason or the need

of that work has been sown in the laying down of office of the ministership of the king of Goura by Rupa and Sanātana in the exposed leelā. Otherwise they are the all time companions in God's love games—this sacrifice is not to be done by them. Also in the near future hundreds of kings—in spite of having been constantly served by queens will be more happy by serving the feet of the followers of kṛṣṇa—the reason or the seed of that work has been activated in the leelā of rescue of Pratāprudra.

In the near future that the pride of intellect of crores of intellectuals will be blown to pieces and that they would roll on the feet of Bhaktidevi—in the exposed leelā the change of Prabodānanda and Sārbabhoum bears the reason or the seed is activatedly otherwise they are the eternal devotees they never have any pride of their intellect. In the near future crores of down troddens untouchables and non-Hindus will assemble and unite in the great arena of Naam-Yagna, will be the most holy and worshipping of all Gods including Brahmā—in Haridās's Harinām sadhan. The reason of this great work or the need is well protected—otherwise non-Hinduism of Brahma Haridās is an impossibility like gold turned into iron. Similarly many works in Gourleelā may have been necessary during that time but these were secondary; actually the necessity and the real effectiveness is to

raise in the future the great luck of the honoured *Jīvas* by the honour of the arrival of Gour in this Kali.

The future *Jīvas* of the present Kali are lucky recipients of the seed or the cause of that unthinkable good luck which was beyond reach not only of the *Jīvas* or Satyayuga but also of any *Jīva* of any other Yuga in this Kalpa. The taste of pure love under Brājarāmā which is coveted by Brahmā and Mahādeb—the luck of possibility of getting that by the *Jīvas* practically killed by Kali—when that is thought, it mesmerises us with surprise—that the message of great hope and profuse joy is embedded in the arrival of Goursundar the fullest form of God and the topmost dispenser of love.

Generally that yuga is called 'Kaliyuga' which comes after Dwāpara and so this yuga is called Kaliyuga by the Śāstra (scriptures). In this exceptional and uncommon Yuga the greatly developed religion of love—as the common and universal religion of all—simultaneously will bestow fulfilment and the greatest of joy to almost all inhabitants of the world. For this exceptional distinction this present Yuga is fit to be called 'Premyuga' instead of Kaliyuga. The ruling Deity of a phase of flow of time is called 'Kali'. After the last day of Dwāpara to the first day of Satya is the ruling period of Kali and so it is called 'Kaliyuga', Kali is the epitome of all vices and the

sin incarnate. It is due to influence of Kali generally men become disbelievers of the existance of God and matters relating to God i.e., they turn their backs to God. Atheism or lack of religion snowballs gradually from the start of Kali and takes its full form at the end of Kali—this is the rule generally of Kaliyugas. The signs and influence to be noticed generally at the end of Kali—this Kaliyuga bears almost all of them though it has just crossed only about 5000 years out of its life span of 432000 years. From this speciality of this Kaliyuga it can be taken as an indication of Kali's early exit. Kali is exiting as if after announcing the beginning of Premyuga. This distinction of the present Kaliyuga when compared to other Kaliyugas is clearly understandable.

In the dictionaries the fourth yuga is called 'Kaliyuga' the meaning also covers wars, fights and quarrels. If one does not find the time to verify the signs of full Kali as mentioned in the Shastras (Scriptures) one can at least tally the meaning of Kali as in dictionary with the present state of affairs of the world. Then completeness of the influence of Kali will be clearly realised. The raised fire of hatred and quarrel is gaining size and momentum every day not only in India but through out the world. The quarrels of rulers and ruled, rich and poor, old and new, between nations, castes, men and women—in the fields of

education, religion and society, inter and intra groups—quarrels and quarrels—in all spheres this fire of hatred is spreading in huge size. When the effort is made to put out the fire of quarrel it spreads hundred folds in as many directions. Such violence and hatred and wars fights and quarrelling mindset—all are manifested simultaneously through out the world—this is almost rare in the history of the world. Leaving aside all other things if you notice the 'quarrel' sign of Kali then the present time can be seen as the full statue of Kali, so when the last signs are visible in the early period of Kali—the world will understand gradually that the influence of Gour leelā is the main reason of death symptoms of Kali.

To turn this Kaliyuga as 'Premyuga' the God of Love shri Gourhari came Himself and sowed the seed of love in this world. The seeds, when sown in the first stage have to spend some time hidden in the womb of mother earth before they sprout—similarly the seed of premdharma activated during Gourleelā is having almost similar first stage—rarely sprouting at places and the second stage is just unfolding. The cause or the seed duly activated had created the waves of love by which 'Sāntipur was about to be drowned and Nabadwip was flooded' the effect of that in the totality will be seen in the near future when the great waves of love will drown India and will flood the world.

It is extremely impossible for Kali to stay in that Kaliyuga where the seed of love or the seed for premdharma has been activated to be practiced through out the world. So observing the exit signs of other Kaliyugas in the beginning of this Kaliyuga blessed by the arrival of Gour the clear indications are that this time Kali will have to go away hurriedly with the arrival or evolving of premyuga. Just like the last flicker of the lamp before it is extinguished, so the show of end signs in the beginning—this is nothing but the signs of starting of extinguishing the powers of Kali. Seeing that his own yuga is going out of his grip Kali has positioned himself for inflicting the 'death blow' to show its full and last power before he has to call it a day.

Kali's greatest influence is to establish materialism and consumerism on the holy shrines of the eternal soul—the inescapable bad result of which is no confidence on religion and disbelief in God. The constant bites of these two harmful insects are withering the soft leafs and twigs of the heavenly inner feelings of the hearts of the people and in these places produce a horrifying dryness of anti God mundane feelings—the other name of which is atheism. The present world is standing in the midst of a furious storm of materialism or atheism created by the influence of Kali on the way to his exit. As if the whole world is on revolt to

disown God openly. Many in the hearts are materialistic or atheist though they may appear to be believers of God in their public front. As this materialistic approach is having the multiplier effect every minute so, worshipping materialism or the great urge for enjoying women and wealth is assuming the indomitable stature like the thirst of a ptyphoid patient. Religion is floating like a worn out skeleton in the turbulent current or extrovertness—this is the feeling of the people.

Religion holds the world. with the degree of the loosening bonds of religion instead of tranquility more and more inequality and uncasiness would spread over the world. From the insults of the religion of soul, inequality and disturbance are generated. All inequalities—all uncasiness, the only reason of all envy, malice, quarrels is the slackening of the religion of soul, Not only in the living world, due to slackening of the religion of the atmosphere, an unheard of change is noticed in the nature too. Unprecedented storm, tornedo, floods, earthquákes, lava of fire from Volcanoes, famines, epidemics, droughts, heavy downpours, electrocution, snow-falls—the news are being published in the newspapers in greater and greater proportion. The only reason of this also is the slackening of the bond string of religion.

This unnatural uneasiness or disturbed situation

through out the world simultaneously—these uncommon indicators are all informing of the coming of a great socialism or a peaceful atmosphere through out the world. The basic concept of religion of love preached by Shri Chaitanya will be the cause of the gradual rise of universal socialism or the profound peace as soon as the exit of Kali is complete and final. The very purpose of motion is not the motion itself—its sole purpose is stability. Any matter remains unstable as long as it dose not achieve stability—to become well stable. So, there cannot be any doubt that this unnatural instability of the present world is the previous act or the beginning of achieving the best undisturbed stability.

The worldwide restlessness is the best proof that the coming of the religion of love will not be confined to a region or a part of the world but will be spread throught the world and that peace that stability and that grand union of equality, world has been searching for for a long long time. As the cool and soothing dawn kissed by the early morning sun appears after the dark and storm—devastated night, so after the end of materialism or open or guarded atheism created by Kali, by the light emanating from the peaceful and soothing dawn of the religion of Bhakti or love the world will again be glowing. Prahlad comes only after Hiranyakashipu has grown to his limit,

so when the civilisation centred on women and wealth reaches its last limit then only the supermost joy unveils and the Premyuga advents—there is not much of a delay of that day—the most joyful day of the world.

Driven by the influence of inconceivable Gourleela, once within the Kalpa the world is standing at the juncture of its worst day and the best day. The rise of Premyuga for the good of the world after the full fury of Kaliyuga on its way to exit—this is the event to be most remembered in the future history of the world. Even in His physical withdrawal the present world is driven through the most surprising and the most wonderful changes due to the multiplier effect of His leelā during the presence in the world of Shri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanyadeb the fullest form of God as God of Love. Though the total result of the main purpose of this multiplier effect is the introduction of Prem dharma or the fullest form of religion of soul, in its secondary effect the same influence is working on in all the spheres policies to be followed in politics, economic society and education. Though at present the influence of Kali will be more widely perceptible instead of the signs of arrival of the Premyuga, one should not lose hope or feel dejected, just because the arrival signals of the Premyuga for doing good to the world are also noticed at intervals during the

shouts of joy of Kali. Before the new arrival of spring one or two mangobuds can be noticed and from there the message that soon through out the country the mangobuds will be blooming all over similarly now in however small form the arrival signals of Premyuga are noticeable in the world disturbed by the influence of Kali—it is to be understood that in the near future these will completely cover the world far and wide with great impact. As the nectar comes out only from the Churned sea, so at present the Premyuga will evolve from this world itself which at present is churned—agitated and disturbed. From the friction of these unsteadiness and inequalities—not only of India but also of the world these inequalities these unsteadiness and frivolous nature and the fast and unnatural changes in all matters are revealing that news very clearly.

As before coming out of water from the Churned Sea, some bouts of poison came out, so also the bad impacts of almost exiting Kali may appear to be fearful to the inhabitants of the world as poisonous and harmful but there is no reason of losing hope. He who as Kurmadeb (God Tortoise) remained at the bottom of Churning of sea and also arranged for drinking of poison by Nilkantha, so where from all Avatārs as His parts emanate and who is the God in His fullest form is present personally as the sole cause of

charning and agitating Kali then the vomitted poison of inequalities on the world by Kali, the remedy to that flow of poison will be possible only on His wishes—there cannot be any doubt on that. The ups and downs of waves of the Churned sea did not stop at delivery of Uchoisraba (the horse of heaven) and Airābat (elephant of heaven), Kamala (goddess of wealth) and Kaustubh (the most precious jewel) but the turmoil continued so long as the necter did not appear—so whatever all other good may appear one after the other due to this movement through out the world—it is impossible to have the complete rest from the disturbance of the world so long as the Premyuga does not appear with the vessel full of nectar of Premdharma after piercing throuh the Ocean of Kali and rising like the morning sun.

From the end of the old itself this new age will come up in the same way as from the worn out and dying root of a banana tree the green powerful sprout comes up—so also the Premdharma will arrive in the world from the end of the old. The religion which is ageless and has remained from the beginning—created by God Himself is permanent; therefore it cannot be non-existant under any circumstances, with the transparency and the lack of it of the society it is seen as bright or dull. It is never nonexistent nor can be under

any condition. The skeleton of religion as is dangling at present before the unclean world maddened by Consumerism—powerless, dirty and withered away conditions from the ashes slowly and steadily will rise the Universal and young Premdharma—it will not be a dry socialism centred on egomad atheism and churred by the hopes of worldly comforts—it will be inspired by the complete faith on God with every breathing—kept secrets by the Vedas—profounded by Shri Gourānga—pure and lively socialism.

The other good indication of the arrival of Premyuga is that due to poisonous interaction of materialism the 'Hiranyakashipu syndrome' or the civilisation centred around women and wealth is born; when the godlessness in man is almost mesmerized by the magical spells of materialism influenced by Kali—the search for any other pursuits except the one for women and wealth are almost extinct—at that very severe bad time of the world—within the fullest influence of Kali—as if by the touch of the sounds of someone's chanting the mantras—the two evils "women" and "wealth" the two fangs of consumerism serpent—have decided to desert the human souls. The composers of the Shastras (Scriptures) say—'*Na Karmani Tyajet yogi Karmabhistyajate Hyasan*' i.e. The yogi does not shun the Karma (work), the Karma (work) shuns the Yogi at proper time, similarly the

materialistic civilisation centred on women and wealth—which was completely destroying the godliness in humans—it is by itself getting frantic to be removed, knowing the arrival time of the greatest religion of soul—Premdharmā.

The women of the world are waking up shedding the spell of mesmerised sleep. They are waking up to be restored in their real selves as the mother of the world as goddess of Power the symbols of great power breaking the shackles of pomp luxury—throwing over board the trans of being just women for satisfying lust under the influence of Kali. Though the speed of this change has not reached the desired goal yet, even then that this progress will be directed to and driven towards the centre of that stability—woman's movement through out the world indicates that possibility. The awakening of the women as 'Mahāshakti' (the great Power) freeing themselves from just being men's women it will not end in breathing fresh air of freedom—as long as they do not turn themselves to worship offering service to God the source of all power—then and then only the woman's awakening will have the full significance. Not only the women of India but through out the world will one day have their rest at the root of the Premdharmā tree of Shri Gourāṅga and will have their complete satisfaction that the need of the cause of that is at the root of wom-

en's awakening though the signs of that are only visible in minisoule form, may not reveal itself fully today but gradually will and will be realised so.

The other fang of the serpent of materialistic civilization i.e., turning our backs to God is the excessive attachment to wealth or worship of wealth. As if by the magic spell of the mantras chanted by someone this obstacle of feeling one's self with wealth is slowly disappearing from the closed and strong grips of humanity. The human soul cannot be freed unless the strong shield of materialism is pulverised to pieces; so to free the souls of the people of the world is the creation of the financial problems of the world—a very severe blow on the maddening sense of acquiring wealth.

Probably never before these has been an emergence of so very clear a picture of the temporary nature over the materialistic wealth with the devaluation of money—revealing that the vast Kingdom to laying of a small family all are unreal as if of a nocturnal dream.

By no other means it will be possible to ascertain the real reason for this financial and materialistic revelation till the clear emergence of the arrival time of 'Premyuga'—this the world will not understand till some passage of time. Thus whether there is any indication of the emergence of 'Premyuga' in the innermost of the preparation

of extracting the two fangs of the atheistic civilisation serpent—my earnest request to the thoughtful readers to think over the matter reflectively.

*'Prithibī paryanta jata āchhe Desh grām,
Sarbatra Sanchār Haibe Mor Nām.*

(Sri Chaitanya Bhāgabat Antya 4 payar)

“My name will radiate through all the countries and villages of the world”.

The fast changes of the world in all its sphere are to prove the efficacy of that prophecy. The main and the greatest purpose of these changes is the arrival of great ‘Premyuga’ through out the world.

The incoming day of this great fortune is hidden behind an unprecedented bad day. Though the influence of Kali will soon disappear, but before its disappearance the last attack of Kali will have such a severe impact on the World that it will be beyond imagination. Same as the dying fly's last jump on the fire, the last and the most severe attack of dying Kali will fall on God and religion; so at that time the true God loving saintly persons will have to stand the kicks of almost mad Kali in the same way as the unperturbed fire accepts the bravado of the dying fly. On the other hand the saintly persons will have to pass through a devastating fire test—as a result of which the sure and real saintliness will be bright and whatever fakes

are there will be burnt out. The flames of devastating fire of Kali will touch their chests more. At that time for the last and final acid test for purification of God believers there will be huge store of tortures and insults day after day. Those will be God's true beloveds in degrees who will with as much calmness and firmness with their heads down be able to welcome these all purification processes. Those will be the fore runners of the messengers of love with the arrival of the premyuga through out the world. For earning this great fortune of carrying the great winning flag of God, we should be prepared from now. With darkness of bad days deepening more and more, the lamp of faith will have to be brightened more and more—and the anthem of victory of God and religion will have to be sung more and more and more fearlessly and in high pitched voices. The poisonous vapour of the movement against God and religion is spreading through out the world by and by, with its intensification in no time, we should get united from now itself to fight against that upto the last after praying for the power to fight. If no co-operation is received from anybody, then like a trusted soldier one must singularly stand firmly in Kali's fight for his life and the arrival of the new era—and one must also promise from now that if required sacrifices one's life at the altar. When the holy blood of a true be-

liever of God would fall on mother earth having spilled from the hands of tyranto, then with that blood offering would rise crores and crores of true devotees simultaneously with the extinction of the influence of Kali. The day of the full test of faith and devotion of those true devotees of God is coming shortly. The seed or the cause sown the causing of Thakur Brahma Haridās in twenty market places—the day is near when the effect of that would start and spread far and wide.

When the torture of the unruly mob mesmerised by the influence of Kali will touch primarily God's men, religion and God, it will be understood then that time has arrived for starting of count down of the influence of Kali being completely lost soon.

At the sight of that Aparādh makes all tolerant God intolerent: He Himself expressed that and cautioned the *jīvas* of the world :—

Yadā Debesu Gosu Bipresu Sādhusu

Dharma Mayi Ca Bidbesah Sa Aasu Binasyati.

(*Shri Bhāgabat* 7/4/27)

The meaning is whenever one acquires an antagonistic attitude towards Gods, the Vedas, the Cows, the Brāhmans, the saints, religion and towards Me, then it may be understood that one's time of destruction has just arrived.

Before that state of a very severe Aparādh is

reached by humanity if the disease of turning away from God could be cured, then nothing more joyful and good could be imagined, but because of our extreme bad luck if the same does not appear to be possible then for the proper treatment of this world wide great disease, on unprecedented devastating war will engulf the entire world—as a result of which all the egoism arrogance and rowdiness of materialism will be quenched—the preparation of that is going secretly in all the civilised countries of the world; all the good wishers of the world are apprehensive of the severity of the incoming war.

Many years before achiveing these two predictions were make out of the two the first one that is equal membership in the united nations has come true. The second predictions is awaiting to become true.

As soon as the heat of the world generated by Kali is quenched, thereafter during the balance period of this present yuga the great socialism will reign throughout the entire world—the great celebration of this great union will rise gradually—that will be the full form of the religion of soul achieving its correct revelation—that is 'Premdharmā' or its main policy propounded by shri Kṛṣṇa Chaitanyadeba—the topmost donor of prema. By the grace of God though India has been given a seat in the United Nations at the

appropriate time—only due to her glory of religion, the United Nations will joyfully on its own award the highest seat to India.

*Bancha Kalpataruvyascha Kripāsindhuvya eba cha
Patitānāṅ Pābanevya Vaishnevya Namō Namah.*

This book was first published in 1340 (B. S.—1937 A.D.). Therefore according to the prediction made 23 years before 1933. The second world war is also finished. If we could get self consciousness after having withstood blows after blows and if we could forsake the illusory (mirage) path of materialism—and if we could newly rotate in the speakless path of love and faith of God—the path of religion of soul, then there could not be any doubt that the air of true peace would have blown over the earth. But instead of that the present human society is affected more by the poisonous fume of materialism and consumerism—created by the Kali who is near his end—and so the hope of them to return to their scheduled religion of self is also getting thinner. Naturally the apprehension is that like the third and the last and final offering to complete the Yajna for putting out the influence of Kali as the last offering a very deadly and fierce third war is waiting as a star of bad luck in the sky of the world. At the end of which with the balance species left after the dead, the possibility remains towards the best rotation.

With whatever victory slogans we may try to edify the conditions of the present world as progress it is really running faster towards disturbance and destruction—to prove this point we are quoting none other than the ex-Prime Minister of India Mr. Nehru—the summary of his speech on the subject is being quoted below from a newspaper.

The prime Minister said, our present age is the age of crisis, Crisis is coming one after the other. If some peace is established

at some time, that peace is not without disturbance. Even then people remain apprehensive of the fear of war and preparation for the same. The downtrodden humanity is very eager for real and true peace. But some bad stars are putting mankind away farther and farther from this coveted object. It appears that humanity having been affected by bad stars are facing crisis one or the other.

Whatever political or economic crisis are confronting us today, the greatest crisis is the crisis of humanity. It will be difficult to solve the other crisis until and unless the crisis of humanity is resolved. (Dainik Basumati 23rd Chaitra, 1354 B. S.).

We have called it 'Kali's influence' whatever he termed as 'bad stars'. What he has indicated as the 'Crisis of humanity' according to the language of the Shastras we have termed it as 'lack of feeling of the soul or 'Religion of soul ashamed'—this is the only difference.

The End

The picture on the cover—a revelation

The flow of Bhakti comes down to this earth through God's eternal followers living in God's eternal abode down to His devotees like the water flow from the holy conchshell. After touching the earth Bhakti takes the shape of a big tank or lake.

There Bhakti in its pure form is transmitted to lotus like jivas who are fully sunk in the mud of material life, through the simultaneous contacts of swanlike sanits or saintly persons and through their discourses~ the discussions on Hari in the form Shri Krishnanama etc. The lotus takes bigger and bigger shape—in association with and serving the devotee—swans; In that picture in the first instance this idea has been depicted.

Darting from the mud like the journey of the lotus to fully bloomed lotus sequentially, the heart of jiva which is also a lotus is touched by the feelings coming consecutively and journeys from 'reverence' 'association of the saint or saintly persons', 'the process and act of worship', 'steadfastness or firm faith' 'liking', 'attachment are deep devotion to God' and later to 'Bhabbhakti' and at the end 'Prembhakti' or turning into a complete lotus full of prem (devotional love) by the touch of pure Bhakti.

All the obstacles on the path of worship are gradually extinguished by the side effects of the act and process of worship the consequential expression of the rise of Prem in the heart of jiva has been shown by the sequential blooming through eight stages of a lotus as in the big pond. By the sweet invitation through the enchanting smell of fully bloomed lotus the way the honeybees of their own fly into it and get trapped in the nectar—similarly God who is not easily reachable by gods and the best of saints even, He of His own comes to the door of the heart of the devotees just as the honeybees and wants to be caught and trapped in the net of love of the devotee. The arrival of the honeybee before the fully bloomed lotus—the picture has depicted and revealed that.

